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THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF SALVATION.

By GEORGE BARKER STEVENS,
Ph.D., D.D., LL.D.

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THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

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NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1905

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PUBLISHED, SEPTEMBER, 1905

Norwood Press
J. S. Cushing & Co. — Berwick & Smith Co.
Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.

TO

JULIUS KAFTAN, D.D.,

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY
OF BERLIN

AND TO

EUGÈNE MÉNÉGOZ, D.D.

DEAN OF THE THEOLOGICAL FACULTY IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF PARIS

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

IN CORDIAL

REGARD AND GRATITUDE

PREFACE

The aim of the present work is to present a biblical, historical, and constructive discussion of the Christian doctrine of salvation. The theme has been regarded and treated primarily as a subject of investigation. I have accordingly approached it from the historical side, and have aimed to state the problems to be considered and to define my positions respecting them in an historical and inductive method. I have tried to judge the various opinions reviewed and to test my own by means of the fundamental Christian concepts of God and of man.

The treatment has been made as objective as possible. It has been my aim to describe and estimate conflicting theories with fairness. My own judgments, with the reasons for them, have been frankly given. It is not to be expected, of course, that they will commend themselves to the acceptance of all readers, but I trust that those who may dissent from them may still find something in the book by which they may be interested or instructed.

The present discussion presupposes a general knowledge of Biblical Theology and of the History of Christian Doctrine, such as is furnished by the relevant sections of my *Theology of the New Testament* and Professor Fisher's *History of Christian Doctrine*, earlier volumes of the International Theological Library.

I cannot more appropriately indicate my own attitude toward the results which I have reached than by citing the words with which Anselm closes his discussion of the same subject: "Si quid diximus quod corrigendum sit, non renuo correctionem, si rationabiliter fit."

GEORGE BARKER STEVENS.

Yale University,
July 13, 1905.

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THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

PART I

THE BIBLICAL BASIS OF THE DOCTRINE

CHAPTER I

THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM

The historical study of Christian doctrine should begin in the Old Testament. There we must seek the germs of which that teaching is the full development. Accordingly, in undertaking an investigation of the Christian doctrine of salvation, it is necessary, first of all, to glance back at the Jewish religion and seek for the points of contact between it and its fulfilment in the gospel. The New Testament constantly assumes a genetic connection between Judaism and Christianity. Its writers unfold their teachings in terms more or less distinctly Jewish and with frequent reference to the Old Testament thought-world.

For our present purpose, two inquiries respecting the Old Testament are especially pertinent. The first concerns the religious import of the priestly, or sacrificial system; the second relates to the prophetic conception of the nature and conditions of salvation. Legalism and prophetism are the two most prominent features of the Jewish religion. They existed side by side and acted and reacted upon each other. In important respects they were rival forces. Both have had their effect in the genesis and development of Christian doctrine. To a consideration of the religious import of these two forces the present chapter and the following one will be devoted.

It should, however, be made distinctly clear in advance, that the historic connection between the Old and the New Testaments to which I have referred, does not warrant the conclusion that Old Testament ideas, as such, are directly normative for Christian belief. The New Testament does not sustain any such supposition. Christianity is the fulfilment, not the republication, of Judaism. The more systematic writers of the New Testament, such as the apostle Paul and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, insist upon the rudimentary character of the Old Covenant, in consequence of which its teaching and practices fall below the Christian plane of moral and spiritual truth. To Christian thought Judaism represents an earlier stage of revelation. It is preparatory and provisional, and therefore imperfect. It furnished, indeed, the historical basis of Christianity, but the two are not identical, nor is the former an adequate test and measure of the latter. In important particulars they are even radically different. For the apostle Paul the law and the gospel are sharply contrasted terms, and our Lord diverges widely from certain Old Testament maxims and practices in applying his principle of fulfilment.

What, then, is the Christian theologian to seek in the Old Testament? I answer that he is to seek the historical presuppositions of Christian doctrine. Old Testament conceptions will always be suggestive and historically instructive for the study of Christian teaching, but a direct source of such teaching they cannot be.[1] Christianity rises high above that national and ritualistic religion on whose soil it took its rise. In a study like the present, then, our inquiry is this: What presumptions concerning the Christian doctrine of salvation are created by the ideas prevailing in the Hebrew religion? Or, to take a specific topic: To what conceptions of atonement through Christ's death would Jewish ideas of sacrifice naturally lend themselves? But any result which we may attain in this field will be of indirect, rather than of direct, value to us. Suppose, for example, that it could be shown that the Jews had a perfectly definite theory of the import of sacrifice. It would not follow that the Christian doctrine of atonement could be deduced from it. We should still have to ask: Does the New Testament directly adopt and sanction this Jewish conception? Does it in no essential respect transcend it, and, if so, does it not in transcending it annul some of its elements? And we should also be warranted in asking the still more fundamental question: To what extent are these Jewish ideas accordant or reconcilable with the essential principles of the Christian religion which we may derive from the life and teaching of Jesus? I am well aware that all such considerations make our task vastly more difficult than it is popularly supposed to be, but nothing can be gained by evading difficulties which belong, in the nature of the case, to the historical investigation of the subject.

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[1] "The real use of the record of the earliest stages of revelation is not to add something to the things revealed in Christ, but to give us that clear and all-sided insight into the meaning and practical worth of the perfect scheme of divine grace which can only be attained by tracing its growth." — W. Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 6.

There are two classes of inquiries concerning the sacrifices which, for our purpose, should be broadly distinguished. One relates to the origin and original import of Semitic sacrifice in general; the other to the religious meaning and value of the sacrifices for the Jews, who practised them under the developed Levitical system. Within recent years great industry and learning have been devoted to the first class of questions. While these investigations are not without their importance, it cannot be said that they have reached any very clear or definite results. Such problems are involved in the obscurity which always besets inquiries into the origin and motives of rites and customs which are not only ancient, but which probably arose from naïve conceptions and undefined feelings of which we possess no clear expression. But even if the problems concerning the origin of Semitic sacrifice could be solved, we should not be greatly aided in determining what the sacrifices meant for the Jews in the Levitical period. Such practices as that of sacrifice undergo great modifications of meaning in the course of time and in the developing moral and institutional life of nations.

The old dispute as to whether sacrifice was instituted by divine command or arose naturally out of the religious nature and wants of man, is an interesting one from the point of view of historical revelation, but our purpose could not be greatly furthered by any theory concerning it. The practical import of a religious ritual could not be determined by the mode in which it originated, even if known. It is scarcely needful to say that the latter of the two conceptions mentioned is so strongly favored by the history of religion, and by the critical investigation of the Old Testament books as to have become practically universal among modern scholars.

In regard to the question, What was the primary motive which prompted the offering of sacrifices? a considerable variety of opinion prevails. The theory that sacrifices were originally gifts to the divinity has been espoused, for example, by Herbert Spencer and E. B. Tylor among anthropologists and by Hermann Schultz and George F. Moore among theologians. We are reminded that in primitive times men thought of their gods in an anthropomorphic way and conceived of them as enjoying gifts of food and drink, after the manner of an earthly chieftain or king. In illustration of this view, reference is made to the offering in the Jewish system of the fruits of the soil, to the thank offerings and covenant sacrifices made in connection with festive or solemn meals, and to the fact that the burning flesh of the sacrificial animal is regarded as a sweet-smelling savor unto Yahweh. Even the expiatory sacrifices are held to have been primarily presents, whereby it was believed that the anger of the Deity was appeased and his favor recovered.[1]

[1] *Cf.* Schultz, *O. T. Theol.* I. 388.

Others have found in the native tendency of man to worship the motive of sacrifice. In this view, the offerings are acts of homage to the Deity, indicative of man's consciousness of dependence and desire for obedience. The sacrifices are virtually prayers and, as such, may express a variety of sentiments and aspirations, such as adoration, repentance, and supplication. This theory has been advocated by Karl Bähr, F. D. Maurice, and R. Smend, who traces sacrifice in Israel through these stages: service or worship (2 Sam. xv. 8), eating together, communion, and reparation or atonement for sin. Somewhat akin to this view is the opinion that sacrifices were primarily common meals, of which the divinity partook with his worshippers. This conception is sometimes so carried out as to denote a mystic sacramental communion between the Deity and men. The theory is thought to be confirmed by the frequent association of sacrifices with sacred feasts, by the widespread idea of the sacredness of animals, and by the phenomena of totemism. It numbers among its advocates some of the most eminent specialists in this field of inquiry, among them Wellhausen, W. Robertson Smith, Tiele, J. G. Frazer, and F. B. Jevons. Albrecht Ritschl advanced a view differing from all the foregoing, to the effect that the sacrifice was conceived of as "covering" or protecting the offerer not from the holy displeasure, but from the glory of Yahweh. In this view there underlay the sacrifices the idea that the presence of Yahweh was so terrible that man must perish unless hidden or covered before it (*cf.* Gen. xxxii. 30; Judg. vi. 22, 23; xiii. 22). Ritschl, accordingly, denied that the sacrifices have special reference to man's sins; they relate rather to his weakness and creaturehood. Thus they are conceived as referring rather to the natural attributes of both man and God — the creaturely condition of man and the majesty of God — than to their moral nature and relations.[1]

Finally, there remains the substitutionary or penal satisfaction theory of sacrifice, according to which the animal is conceived of as taking the place of the sinner and suffering death in his stead. This theory is commonly, though not necessarily, associated with the belief that the sacrificial system was of direct divine appointment. This has long been the popular view in Protestant theology and has been regarded as one of the chief supports of the penal interpretation of the death of Christ. The argument is: As the sacrificial animal suffered a vicarious death for the sinner whom he represented, so Christ endured the penalty due to the sins of those whose place he assumed before the divine law, and, as God was pleased to accept the animal's death in substitution for the death of the sinner, so he looks upon the death of Christ as the equivalent of the sinner's punishment whereby the possibility of forgiveness is opened to him. It will be noticed that the argument proceeds on two assumptions, which we shall have to consider later, namely: (1) that the notion of a *poena vicaria* is the fundamental idea of the sacrificial system, and (2) that this idea and its associations, supposed to underlie the Jewish system of animal sacrifice, are directly available as categories with which to explain the occasion and import of the sufferings and death of Christ. The theory in question may be called the common, or traditional, view of the subject, and is expounded in such earlier treatises on the subject as Fairbairn's *Typology* and Kurtz's *Der alttestamentliche Opfercultus*. Some recent writers who cannot be regarded as theologically predisposed in its favor, have also given it their sanction.[1] Paul

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[1] See *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, II. 201–203.

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[1] Principal A. M. Fairbairn expresses the opinion that the Jewish sacrifices were propitiatory, but that it does not follow that the sacrifice of Christ had that character: "In the Levitical, as in other religious systems, the sacrifice was offered to please God, to win his favor, to propitiate him by the surrender of some object precious to man. But in the Christian system this standpoint is transcended; the initiative lies with God. Whatever the death of Christ may signify, it does not mean an expedient for quenching the wrath of God, or for buying off man from his vengeance. This was a great gain for religion." — *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion*, p. 500. Whether this view of Jewish sacrifice, which seems to place it on a level with the propitiatory offerings of heathen religions, is warranted, will be considered as we proceed. If correct, it is certainly a welcome assurance that it has been discarded by Christianity.

Volz defends it in the *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* for 1901, and H. J. Holtzmann, though holding that the idea of substitution was originally foreign to the ritual, declares that in the popular thought, especially in the late Jewish period, "everything pressed toward the assumption that the offering of a life, substituted for sinners according to God's appointment, cancelled the death penalty which they had incurred, and that consequently the offered blood of the sacrificial victims expiated sin as a surrogate for the life of the guilty."[1]

Many plausible considerations are urged in favor of each of these theories, and yet no one of them seems entirely adequate. The probability is that the origin and motives of sacrifice are not so simple as any one theory in regard to them would imply. Religion is a complex affair, and various motives are operative in the development of its beliefs and practices. Moreover, these motives, though distinguishable, are more or less closely akin to each other. Let us assume for the moment the correctness of the simplest theory of sacrifice, the gift theory. But the idea of a present to the Deity is itself an act of homage or worship. The gift of what has value for the giver is made in recognition of the superior rights or claims of the divinity. And this idea of homage, in turn, would naturally deepen into the feeling of fellowship or communion. If the offered gift is regarded as sacred; if, for example, the idea obtains that there is some mysterious connection between the life of the divinity and the life or blood of the animal, then the conviction will naturally arise that in offering the animal in sacrifice the worshipper enters into communion with the Power whom he would honor. Then, again, when the sense of sin is deepened in men; when the conception of the divine holiness arises and man appreciates the moral separation between himself and the Deity, it will then be natural that sacrifice should assume a more distinct reference to sin. It will become the means whereby sin is confessed and reconciliation with the offended divinity sought. Thus it would naturally happen that gifts which in a more naïve religious condition were merely presents, should come to be regarded as the means of a mystic communion or even as a cover or protection from the displeasure felt by the Deity toward the sins of his worshippers.

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[1] *Neutest. Theol.* I. 68.

The phenomena of the developed sacrificial system in Judaism seem to sustain some such general view as this. Different offerings are seen to reflect differing moods and motives in the worshipper. In more primitive times we find the peace offering associated with the sacrificial feast, expressive of gladness and rejoicing, while the burnt offering is associated with occasions of solemnity, awe, and fear. In the developed Levitical system we have, for example,[1] the sacrifices of worship, such as the burnt offering expressive of the people's reverence for Yahweh; the thank offerings presented on special festive occasions as expressions of gratitude to God, and the sin and guilt offerings whose special object is to express the sense of sin and to obtain reconciliation with God.

Now, even if it were possible by psychological analysis or historic research to trace these various forms of sacrifice back to a common original motive, the result would not greatly aid us in our present purpose. The actual working system of sacrifice in Judaism was complex. It was many-sided, like the religious life out of which it sprang. It expressed, in its various parts, gratitude, rejoicing, fellowship, penitence. So far as it influenced primitive Christian thought and supplied the categories for its expression, it would naturally emphasize no one single element of religious experience, but rather that whole range of emotions and convictions of which it was the ceremonial expression. We shall see that this general view of the case is warranted by the testimony of the New Testament in which we find those various illustrative uses made of sacrificial ideas which the many-sided system of offerings would lead us to anticipate.

One question requires a more particular consideration: Was the sacrificial victim's life regarded as taking the place of the offerer's life? Was the animal conceived of as a penal substitute for the sinner? As has been already indicated, this view has been widely held among scholars and is, of course, the popular assumption regarding the meaning of sacrifice. Let us review the arguments which are advanced in its support. The main reliance for the theory is placed upon the description in Lev. xvi. of the ceremony of sending away the scapegoat into the wilderness on the Day of Atonement. There we read: "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, even all their sins; and he shall put them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a man that is in readiness into the wilderness; and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a solitary land; and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness" (*vv.* 21, 22). It is further stated that he who thus dismisses the goat in the wilderness incurs defilement and must wash his clothes and bathe his flesh before he returns to the camp (*v.* 26). Now, it is argued, we have here the most distinct statement that the sins of the people are put by the priest upon the head of this victim for Azazel and by him borne away into the desert. In the same connection (*v.* 28) we are told that a similar defilement was contracted by him who burned the flesh of the sin offerings. The inference is that this contamination was due to the fact that these victims were regarded as laden with the people's guilt, and their death conceived as a substitute for the people's penalty.

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[1] I follow here the classification of Schultz, *O. T. Theol.* I. 376 *sq.*

An argument closely related to the foregoing is derived from the supposed import of the laying on of hands upon sacrificial victims. It is repeatedly enjoined in the Levitical ritual that in the making of private offerings the offerer shall place his hands upon the head of his oblation (Lev. iii. 2, 8, 13; iv. 4), and in case of certain sin offerings on behalf of the whole congregation, that "the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the Lord" (Lev. iv. 15). In other instances this ceremony is performed, as in the case of the scapegoat, by the priests (Lev. viii. 14). The theory in question regards it as self-evident or, at any rate, as well established, that the laying on of hands implies, in such cases, the substitution of the victim for the sinner and directly denotes the imposition of the offerer's sins and the transfer of his guilt. Thus the animal's death would replace the sinner's punishment. His sin is punished vicariously and its penalty is therefore remitted.

Further, it is contended that the natural import of the whole ritual is substitutionary. The slaughter of a pure victim on whose head the owner places his hands; the sprinkling of the blood on the altar by the priest; the consumption of the victim's flesh by fire — what can this so naturally mean — what, indeed, can it mean at all, except the substitution of the animal's death for the offerer's punishment, whereby he is, either symbolically or really, freed from the penalty of his sins?

In this interpretation of the import of sacrifice we find the elements of the penal substitution theory of the death of Christ. One has but to transfer this explanation, *mutatis mutandis*, to the problem of the saving value of Christ's sufferings and death and carry out its logical implications, in order to construct the theory in detail. From this Old Testament source that theory always derived plausible support, especially in the popular mind. The categories of the theory in question naturally lend themselves to the development of a theory of salvation by substitute through a system of equivalences and imputations. The explanation is clear, striking, and realistic. There is nothing vague, nothing mysterious about it. As the sacrificial animal died in place of the sinner, so Christ's death was the penal equivalent and substitute of the eternal death which our sins deserved, and having been thus endured by him vicariously, need not be again endured by us; whence arises the possibility of our forgiveness. I am only concerned here to point out three things: So far as this argument derives confirmation from the sacrificial ritual, it assumes (1) the indisputable correctness of the substitutionary interpretation; (2) the appropriation by Christ himself and the apostolic Church of this conception and its corollaries in their application to his death; and (3) the entire legitimacy of transferring over the ideas underlying a system of animal sacrifice to the interpretation of Christ's saving work. These points we must carefully keep in mind as we proceed.

With regard to the first point it must be noted that a decided and increasing majority of specialists in the study of the subject would greatly modify or entirely deny the theory of the substitutionary import of Jewish sacrifice. Some of the difficulties which it encounters are as follows: (1) The ceremonies connected with the sending of the scapegoat into the wilderness prove nothing concerning the import of sacrifice. The flesh of this goat was not burned; atonement was not made by its blood; it was not a sacrifice at all. The origin and meaning of the goat "for Azazel" are indeed obscure. Azazel, who is not mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament,[1] appears to have been conceived as a demon-prince who inhabited the desert, and the ceremony of delivering over to him the goat, laden with the sins of the people, was probably a realistic way of representing their sins as now borne away to the evil spirit to whom they belonged. The Levitical ritual thus preserves, probably, an earlier, popular belief to which there are many analogies among primitive peoples. "The carrying away of the people's guilt to an isolated and desert region has its nearest analogies, not in ordinary atoning sacrifices, but in those physical methods of getting rid of an infectious taboo which characterize the lowest forms of superstition. The same form of disinfection recurs in the Levitical legislation, where a live bird is made to fly away with the contagion of leprosy (Lev. xiv. 7, 53)."[2]

We turn, next, to the rite of the laying on of hands. Outside the sacrificial ritual we meet with several uses of this ceremony. It is a symbol of blessing when Jacob places his hands upon the heads of his sons (Gen. xlviii. 14). The witnesses laid their hands upon those whom they had heard to blaspheme, apparently in solemn attestation of their testimony (Lev. xxiv. 14). The Levites were set apart to priestly functions by the imposition of hands (Num. viii. 10), and by the same rite Moses set apart Joshua as his successor (Num. xxvii. 18, 23; Deut. xxxiv. 9). Now the general idea underlying this ceremony can hardly be doubtful; it is that of benediction or dedication. What the precise idea is in case of the witnesses is not quite clear. The act may denote the devotion of the accused to the death penalty, or serve to identify the witnesses as those who are responsible for the accusation. But what is of principal importance to be noted is that, so far as the act symbolizes impartation, it is the impartation of *good;* no instances are found in which any *evil*, such as guilt or a curse, is conceived to be transferred to any person by the laying on of hands. The presumption, therefore, is that such is not the case in the sacrificial ritual. But there is no intimation in connection with any sacrifice that the offerer's guilt is regarded as transferred to the animal. Were that the case it would seem that the victim's flesh would be unclean; on the contrary, it is "most holy" (Lev. x. 17) and is eaten by the priest. The probability, therefore, is that the laying on of hands does not denote, in the case of the sacrifices, the transfer of guilt, but some other idea, such as the devotion of the victim to God or the worshipper's acknowledgment of it as his own.[1]

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[1] He appears in *The Book of Enoch*, ch. x., as the leader of the evil angels who formed unions with the daughters of men (*cf.* Gen. vi. 2–4).

[2] W. R. Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, p. 422.

The substitutionary theory encounters a further difficulty in the fact that offerings were not accepted in atonement for sins meriting death (Num. xv. 30), whereas this would be most natural if the system contemplated the substitution of the victim's death for that of the offerer. In this case also it would seem necessary that the animal should be slain by the priest or God's representative and not, as he was, by the owner. Moreover, we find that all the offerings atone — the gift of fine flour (the offering of the poor), as well as the animal sacrifice (Lev. v. 11–13). How could such be the case if the notion of a death substituted were the underlying idea of the sin offering? It may be pointed out, further, that the penal interpretation of the laying on of hands finds no parallel in the case of Christ since no hands were laid on him.

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[1] "In ordinary burnt-offerings and sin-offerings the imposition of hands is not officially interpreted by the Law as a transference of sin to the victim, but rather has the same sense as in acts of blessing or consecration (Gen. xlviii. 14; Num. viii. 10; Deut. xxxiv. 9), where the idea, no doubt, is that the physical contact between the parties serves to identify them, but not specially to transfer guilt from the one to the other." W. R. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 423. Similarly, Schultz says that "by the laying on of the hand sin is not transferred to the victim," but by

Why, then, we are led to ask, has the theory of penal substitution been so widely accepted? Why has it been so generally regarded as embodying the natural and obvious meaning of the sin offerings? We must answer that this conception furnishes a groove into which religious reflection may easily slip and thereafter run smoothly with no sense of the vagueness and perplexity which attach to more subjective and mystical interpretations. The later Judaism furnishes us the classical example of the application to sacrifice of those physical and mechanical categories with which was built up the Pharisaic system of satisfactions, imputations, and merit-treasuries. It is an illustration of the externalizing of religious conceptions and of their translation into terms of mathematical equivalence and pecuniary debit and credit. To this process of externalizing the whole Jewish system of sacrifice was subjected by talmudic reflection. To assign precise dates to the beginning or completion of this process of thought

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this act "the sacrificer dedicates each victim, as his own property, to some higher object." — *O. T. Theol.* I. 391. Dillmann writes: "Die Handauflegung kommt bei allen Opfern vor und will nicht die Sünden übertragen auf das Tier (wie Lev. xvi. 21 beim Asaselbock), sondern nur die Intention des Opfernden, hier das Sühneverlangen, mitgeben." *Alttest. Theol.*, p. 468. "The theory that the victim's life is put in the place of the owner's is nowhere hinted at." G. F. Moore, Art. *Sacrifice* in *Encycl. Bibl.* *Cf.* J. C. Matthes, *Zeitschr. für d. alttest. Wissensch.*, 1903.

is, of course, impossible. Some think that it had attained a considerable development while the temple was still standing and that traces of it are even visible in the Priestly Code,[1] while others hold that, so far as the Old Testament is concerned, the idea of a *poena vicaria* is a pure importation.[2] But, whenever the penal substitution theory arose, it is quite certain that it was foreign to the original meaning of the sacrifices. It is a late theory of their significance, the product of Pharisaic scholasticism, and is without attestation in the Old Testament itself. The utmost that can be granted to the theory in question would be to admit the opinion of Holtzmann that, while the penal interpretation of sacrifice is historically unwarranted, it was, nevertheless, popularly entertained within the Old Testament period,[3] or the judgment of Dillmann that the ritual did contemplate a substitution, not indeed a substitution *in kind*, but the gracious substitution for the penalty of something (the *Kopher*, λύτρον, blood of the offering) which was not itself penal or sin-bearing.[4] We must conclude, therefore, that whatever may have been the popular interpretation of Jewish sacrifice, neither its original nor its intended and prevailing meaning was penal or substitutionary.

What, then, did it mean? What was the object of the sin offerings if not penal satisfaction? It must be admitted that no answer has ever been given which is so simple and clear as that of the popular, late Jewish theory. But the simplicity of an explanation does not necessarily commend it. That quality may be due to the superficiality or coarseness of the theory. The difficulty of proposing a perfectly definite answer to the question arises from the uncertainty as to what was the primary and dominant motive of sacrifice, and from the evident complexity of the ideas associated with it. We can here hardly do more than indicate certain conclusions which modern research seems to warrant: (1) The original and prevailing idea of sacrifice was probably that of a gift — a gift for the divinity to eat or drink or smell, or a gift to be eaten by him and his worshippers in common. With the development of the religious consciousness this gift-idea would naturally expand into the expression of such sentiments as gratitude, homage, and fellowship.[1] (2) A series of mystical ideas attached themselves to the blood. This element was conceived to be the seat of life and, as such, was sacred and possessed of a mystical power. From this idea would easily arise the conviction that God has given to man this sacred gift as the means whereby he should approach him in worship and penitence, and which God should accept as a covering for his sins.[2] (3) It is probable that the idea of the solidarity of the tribe or race, which was so strong in Semitic antiquity, had its part in the development of the sacrificial system. The sins of parents were regarded as entailed upon children. Yahweh's suffering Servant might make reparation for the sins of his fellows. On the analogy of these ideas the sacred animal might be conceived as representing the life of the community, which is given up to God in consecration or (as in the later and popular conception) in penal suffering. (4) In the Levitical Code the sacrificial system has a special connection with the confession and forgiveness of sin. There can be no doubt that certain offerings were particularly designed to emphasize the reality and guilt of sin and to keep alive in the people the sense of God's displeasure toward it. If these offerings did not appease God by affording penal satisfaction, they did express contrition and were regarded as the divinely appointed means whereby sin's heinousness should be confessed and attested. (5) It is clear, however, that the Levitical Code assumes that God is not hostile to man or indisposed to forgive, but that, of his own accord, he approaches the sinner in mercy, and himself provides the ways and means of reconciliation. Here is the radical difference between the heathen and the biblical conceptions of sacrifice. Whatever the sacrifices may have been conceived to accomplish, and in whatever way they may have been regarded as operating, it is evident that they assume the antecedent graciousness of God, who, though prescribing conditions, offers a free forgiveness. (6) The substitution which was involved in the sacrifices was of the nature of a scenic or symbolic representation rather than of a strict literal or penal character. It is the gracious substitution of one way of accepting the sinner for another. In place of his actual obedience (that is, despite his sin) God accepts him in his offering which expresses his intention of obedience and his yearning for salvation. It thus appears that the Priestly Code, though having many outward features in common with heathen sacrificial systems and differing in its emphasis widely from the prophetic teaching, is not wanting in ethical elements. Its outward ritual, though exposed to great misconception and misuse, is the pictorial expression of truths concerning God and man and sin, which are fundamental to the Christian doctrine of salvation. How this ritual stood related to the doctrine of the prophets and how far it supplied materials for early Christian teaching we have next to consider.[1]

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[1] So Holtzmann, *Neutest. Theol.* I. 66.

[2] So G. F. Moore, Art. *Sacrifice* in *Encycl. Bibl.*; *cf.* Smend, *Alttest. Religionsgeschichte*, p. 128: "Es ist zweifelhaft ob die Israeliten stellvertretende Hinrichtung kannten." Professor A. B. Davidson writes: "The traditional explanation (that the life given atones for sin) has been that the death of the victim was a *poena vicaria* for the sin of the offerer. And it is probable that this idea did become attached to sacrifice. It is questionable, however, when other things are considered, if it be found in the law." After summarizing the reasons to the contrary, which are, briefly: (1) that sacrifices were gifts, (2) that they were offered for sins of inadvertency, and (3) that they were offered mainly for a people already in covenant fellowship with God, Dr. Davidson concludes: "It does not appear probable that the death of the victim was regarded by the law as a penalty, death being the highest possible penalty." *Theol. of O. T.*, p. 353.

[3] *Op. cit.* I. 68.

[4] *Op. cit.*, pp. 468, 469.

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[1] "Freude war der Grundzug des althebräischen Cultus," Smend, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

[2] For an elaborate description of the mystic meanings and uses of blood in Semitic antiquity, see Dr. H. C. Trumbull's books, *The Blood Covenant* and *The Threshold Covenant.*

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[1] For detailed information concerning the sacrifices I would refer the reader to the very thorough article *Sacrifice* by Professor W. P. Paterson in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, to which I acknowledge my indebtedness. The development of the sacrificial system in Israel is traced in a clear and masterly manner by Professor Smend in his *Alttest. Religionsgeschichte*, § 9.

CHAPTER II

THE PROPHETIC DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

In passing from the Levitical ritual to the teaching of the prophets we enter a new world. The former gives the impression that the cultus is the chief vehicle of God's grace to man, especially that forgiveness is mediated solely through sacrifice. The writer of Hebrews did not overstate the case in saying that "under the law almost everything was purified with blood; and unless blood was shed, no forgiveness was to be obtained."[1] The prophets recognize no such necessity. They never imply, or even admit, that the divine favor or forgiveness is inseparably linked with sacrifice or any other ceremony. "Ritual has no place in the prophetic teaching; that which is moral alone has any meaning."[2]

Indeed, we meet in the prophets with sharp criticism of the sacrifices as practised at the time. Speaking on behalf of Yahweh, Hosea exclaims, "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hos. vi. 6). Amos is more vehement: "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt offerings and meal offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts" (Amos v. 21, 22). The word of Yahweh by Isaiah is to the same effect: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? I delight not in the blood of bullocks, and of lambs, and of he-goats" (Is. i. 11); and echoes of these thoughts are found in other prophets and in poets who share the prophetic spirit.[1] What, then, was the prophetic estimate of sacrifice? It would be an exaggeration to say that the prophets condemned the institution of sacrifice in general. In many expressions they assumed its legitimacy. The question is commonly answered by saying that they regarded sacrifice, if unaccompanied by a righteous life, as an abomination to Yahweh. Dr. Davidson calls in question the correctness of this answer and defines their position thus: that sacrifice as a *substitute* for a righteous life is an abomination.[2] This may be the more accurate statement, but it is difficult to see how the practice of sacrifice apart from righteousness could fail to result in the substitution of sacrifice for righteousness. When the ritual is formal and unreal, it inevitably usurps the place of reality in worship. But in any case two points cannot be doubtful: (1) that the prophets inveighed against the exaggerated importance of ritual, declaring that sacrifice, for example, was of small value *in comparison* with sincerity, uprightness, and obedience, and from this position it must follow, (2) that they could not have regarded the sacrifices as essential accompaniments of repentance or necessary media of forgiveness. They place no emphasis upon them. To the question, What does Yahweh require of man? they answer in the spirit of Micah's reply, "To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God" (Mi. vi. 8). In the view of many, the prophets did not regard sacrifice as one of the primitive, divinely established institutions of Israel. There are passages (Jer. vii. 22; Amos v. 25) which seem to declare that "in the wilderness God prescribed no ritual to Israel."[3] But if these passages do not intend to make so sweeping an assertion, they cannot mean less than to affirm the relative unimportance of sacrificial rites.

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[1] Heb. ix. 22. Twentieth Century New Testament.

[2] A. B. Davidson, Art. *Prophecy* in Hastings's *D. B.*

We shall best approach the prophetic doctrine by raising the question as to the nature of salvation. Salvation from what? We must remember that in the Old Testament the idea of salvation was the subject of a long development, and is therefore many-sided. The typical case of salvation in early Israel was the deliverance of the nation from bondage in Egypt. Echoes of this idea of salvation are heard throughout their whole history. Salvation is deliverance from perils, victory over enemies, the achievement of security and prosperity.[1] This conception of salvation has two characteristic notes; the deliverance is primarily (1) external and (2) national. Let us now observe the influence of the prophetic spirit upon this idea.

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[1] *E.g.* 1 Sam. xv. 22; Jer. vii. 22, 23; Mi. vi. 6–8; Ps. xl. 6; li. 16.

[2] *D. B.* IV. 119.

[3] G. A. Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, I. 171.

The material and national aspects of salvation are still prominent in the prophets. When the figure of Messiah emerges into view, he wears the appearance of a national Deliverer. He is a kind of second David, a King who shall reign and prosper and execute justice in the earth, in whose days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely (Jer. xxiii. 5, 6). Another prophet had described the glorious coming age as a time of deliverance from enemies, a period of happiness and prosperity under a wise and just government (Amos ix. 11–15). Especially did the experiences of the exile sharpen this conception and quicken the hope of national salvation. This hope finds classic expression in Jeremiah, "Fear not thou, O Jacob my servant, neither be dismayed, O Israel: for lo! I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return and be quiet and at ease, and none shall make him afraid" (Jer. xlvi. 27). In like manner Ezekiel depicts the salvation of the scattered flock of Israel when Yahweh shall set up one shepherd over them who shall feed them, even his servant David (Ezek. xxxiv. 22, 23), and Zechariah's message takes a similar form, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Behold, I will save my people from the east country and the west country: and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness" (Zech.

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[1] *Cf.* Deut. xx. 2–4; 1 Sam. iv. 3; x. 19; Ps. cvi. 4, 5.

viii. 7, 8). The blessedness of this happy time when Yahweh shall accomplish the salvation of the nation was one of the favorite themes of poets. Viewed in anticipation it inspired the prayer: "Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the nations" (Ps. cvi. 47); viewed from the standpoint of its accomplishment, it prompted the song, "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and song; and he is become my salvation" (Is. xii. 2).

But it will be readily seen that this national salvation is not a mere political deliverance. Not in freedom and prosperity alone shall the people dwell, but in truth and righteousness. Ethical and spiritual conditions are prominent characteristics of the Messianic era. The coming King shall be a just judge, as well as a tender shepherd (Is. xi. 4). He shall right the wrongs of earth not only by binding up the brokenhearted and proclaiming liberty to the captives, but by announcing the day of vengeance of our God (Is. lxi. 1, 2). But perhaps the most striking expression of the moral character of the promised salvation is found in Jeremiah's oracle of the New Covenant where we are told that the law of that happy era is to be the inner law of free obedience: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jer. xxxi. 33). It is clear that notwithstanding the prominence given to external features, such as outward prosperity and peace, the salvation of the nation and real moral righteousness go hand in hand.[1]

What, now, was the nature of that righteousness which accompanied salvation and gave to it its deeper meaning? Formally considered, righteousness in the Old Testament is a forensic conception. To be righteous is to be "in the right," as in a controversy or a suit at law.[2] But this definition does not greatly aid us in determining the actual content of the term. To say that righteousness in men is accord with the will of God who is always "in the right," does not help us to any real explanation. We need to know something of the contents of Yahweh's sovereign will, and something of its relation to his moral character before righteousness will mean anything tangible. With what moral ideas, we ask, did the prophets clothe this conception of Yahweh's rightness, and what do these ideas involve for human conduct and character? We must answer, first of all, that they conceived the will of God as stable and consistent, incapable of being moved from the strict line of rectitude by fickle passions on his own part or by appeals or entreaties on the part of his worshippers. In other words, they based the purposes of God in his ethical nature, and conceived of his righteousness as the perfect harmony of his will with that nature. In this way the term "righteousness" as applied to God acquired a distinctly moral character. Righteousness in men is conformity to the will of God, or, what is the same thing, likeness to him in character.

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[1] See Professor William Adams Brown's article *Salvation* in Hastings's *D. B.* To this admirable article I am much indebted.

[2] See W. R. Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 71, 72, and J. Skinner, Art. *Righteousness in O. T.* in Hastings's *D. B.*

But the thoughts of the prophets are never presented in abstract form. What concrete acts and qualities constituted for them true righteousness? We shall see that they were such as could not be determined by legal rules or traditional customs. The prophets appealed to the moral sense, and measured matters of right and wrong by tests which were purely ethical. God's righteousness is seen, for example, in his absolutely equitable dealings with men, and the righteousness of the nation consists, in part, in a correspondingly correct administration of justice. A righteous government will "relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Is. i. 17). Similarly, God's righteousness is seen not only in executing judgment upon sin, but in saving his people and in blessing the penitent. He is "a just God and a Saviour" (Is. xlv. 21). In like manner righteousness in men will require not only that they shall "do justice," but that they shall "love mercy" (Mi. vi. 8). "The Old Testament writers know nothing of the sharp contrast often drawn by theologians between the righteousness and the mercy of God."[1] To the same effect Dr. Davidson writes: "God is righteous in forgiving the penitent: 'Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation; and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness' (Ps. li. 14). There is no antithesis between righteousness and grace. The exercise of grace, goodness, forgiveness, may be called righteousness in God. Thus: 'Answer me in thy faithfulness and in thy righteousness, and enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be found righteous' (Ps. cxliii. 1). Here righteousness is opposed to entering into judgment, *i.e.* to the very thing which technically and dogmatically is called righteousness."[2] Without pursuing the subject further it is evident that the prophetic conception of that righteousness in which and to which the nation is to be saved has a strongly ethical cast. It stands in contrast to all such sins as partiality, cruelty, and oppression. It is a broad conception. It is, at once, uprightness and equitableness; hostility to the wrongs and defence of the rights of man; it is, in a word, a due regard for all the interests of mankind, a moral kinship to him who exercises and delights in lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth (Jer. ix. 24). While, therefore, we must recognize the external and political features of the conception of salvation even in the prophets, we must also recognize the deepening and ethicizing which the conception experienced at their hands.

In the classic period of prophecy the conception of Israel's salvation was dominated by the Messianic idea in its various forms. The conception varied in breadth and spirituality according as the coming One was conceived as an ideal King, or a moral Hero, or was foreshadowed as a suffering Servant of God. But in their highest flights of inspiration the great prophets catch glimpses not only of a universal peace, but of a world-wide worship and service of Yahweh. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose" (Is. xxxv. 1). The voice of weeping shall no more be heard, and darkness and gloom shall be banished from the world (Is. lxv. 19 ; lx. 19, 20). The knowledge of Yahweh shall no more be confined to Israel, but shall fill the earth (Jer. xxxi. 34; Hab. ii. 14). Egypt and Assyria shall be worshippers with Israel of the one true God (Is. xix. 24, 25). God shall make the faithful remnant not only a means of restoring the nation but also a light to the Gentiles, the medium of his salvation to the ends of the earth (Is. xlix. 6).

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[1] Skinner, *D. B.* IV. 280.

[2] *The Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 134.

Here the prophetic idea of the purpose of Israel's election comes clearly into view. Why, of all the families of the earth, had Yahweh known only Israel? (Amos iii. 2.) Hosea answers that the choice was an act of love (Hos. xi. 1). Love to whom? Was it love to Israel alone? Is the love of Yahweh narrow and partial? Is he a respecter of persons? The prophets' answer to this question is founded on their conception of Yahweh's universal sway. The God of the whole earth cannot love Israel alone, and cannot have chosen him for his own sake alone. If Israel is chosen to privilege, he is chosen, much more, to service. If he is chosen to be the favorite of heaven, he is made such only that he may be the dispenser of blessing to mankind. His election does not mean a monopoly of the divine favor; it means rather appointment to a world-historical mission. God has set his love upon the nation in order that he might make it the vehicle of conveying the knowledge of his saving grace to mankind. "Israel is elect for the sake of the non-elect."[1]

This enlargement and deepening of the conception of salvation, on the one hand, and the nation's experience of misfortune, disappointment, and suffering on the other, doubtless account for the tendency to remand the realization of the Messianic blessedness to a new world-age with changed conditions. The conception of a new heaven and a new earth (Is. lxv. 17; lxvi. 22), a renovated nature in the era of redemption, can hardly have been purely figurative for the prophet's mind. It reappears in a highly realistic form in Paul's picture of the Messianic time (Rom. viii. 21, 22). As this distinction between the present and the coming age was sharpened, it became the basis of the wide separation which was made in the apocalyptic books and in the popular thought of later Judaism, between the present period of suffering and expectancy and the glorious coming era of victory and peace which the Messiah shall inaugurate. In early Christian thought, in turn, this same sharp contrast was applied to the distinction between "this present evil age" (Gal. i. 4) and the happy time which shall follow Christ's parousia. Echoes of this late prophetic conception of the Messianic era as radically different from the present, are heard in the eschatological passages of the New Testament, such as the Pauline apocalypse (2 Thess. ii. 1–12), and in the popular language of religion which still refers salvation to a future world.

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[1] *Cf.* Bruce, *Apologetics*, Bk. II. ch. iii.

Let us turn now from these more general considerations to those elements of prophetic teaching which are more closely akin to Christian doctrine. One of these is the conception of individual salvation. The frustration of the national hopes consequent upon the exile tended to draw attention away from the people as a whole and to awaken interest in the individual. This growing individualism was accompanied by a stronger sense of personal responsibility. Under its influence men shall not say: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every man shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge" (Jer. xxxi. 29, 30). This same proverb is cited and refuted by Ezekiel (xviii. 2) to whom Yahweh's word came saying, "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. xviii. 4). This whole chapter is devoted to disproving the idea of hereditary sin and to enforcing the truth of individual responsibility to God. "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek. xviii. 20).

One of the most important religious consequences of this increased sense of the responsibility and worth of the individual was the strengthening of the idea of personal immortality. The Old Testament, taken as a whole, illustrates a surprising indifference to the question of a life beyond the grave. Except by somewhat precarious inferences from the stories of Enoch and Elijah, we obtain no intimation of personal immortality in the historical books. All interest centres on the prosperity and perpetuity of the tribe or the nation. The same silence pervades the writings of the prophets. We meet with the most fervid descriptions of God's faithfulness to his people and with the most glowing pictures of the nation's future; but of personal immortality beyond death there is not one clear word.[1] In the Psalms and Wisdom books the outlook into the future, for the individual, is little, if any, clearer. Now and again the poets of Israel strike a strain of hope and sing of God's power over death and Sheol,[2] but the triumphant strain is soon lost in uncertainty and sadness.[3] The faith expressed in passages like Ps. xvi. 10 and xvii. 15 is not sustained. The glimpse which Job has of his vindication in another life (Job xix. 25–27) is momentary, and he quickly turns back to seek a solution of his problem here in this world. It is only in the late Book of Daniel that we meet the culmination of the developing individualism which we have been tracing. Here, at last, we find the explicit assertion of that conviction which the truths of God's boundless sway and infinite love seem to us so obviously to require — the conviction of a resurrection to a life of rewards and punishments in the coming age (Dan. xii. 2, 3).

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[1] The resurrection and bestowment of life described in Hosea (vi. 1–3; xiii. 14) and Ezekiel (ch. xxxvii) quite obviously refer to the recovery of the nation from disaster. Two passages in Isaiah appear to refer to a future life: "He hath swallowed up death forever" (xxv. 8), and "Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies (*i.e.* the departed members of the nation) shall arise" (xxvi. 19). But the critical difficulties surrounding these passages are great. The whole section, chs. xxiv–xxvii, is very late. Duhm regards the first passage cited as a "Randbemerkung eines Lesers" (*Comm. in loco*). But, in any case, it is questionable whether it carries us beyond the idea of exemption from death in the Messianic age; while the second passage is still dominated by the idea of national salvation. The prediction (or wish) seems to mean that the members of the nation who shall have died before the consummation shall be recovered from Sheol to participate in the promised blessedness.

[2] *E.g.* Ps. xlix. 15; lxxiii. 23–26.

[3] See Ps. vi. 5; cxv. 17.

How is this eclipse of the belief in personal immortality to be explained? And what is the secret of its final emergence? While neither question can be adequately answered in a single word, I cannot doubt that the overshadowing importance which was attached to the national life and the national salvation tended powerfully to retard the development of this belief. And when, at length, largely through the work of the prophets, the religious value of the individual came to be better appreciated, the way was opened to the logical conclusion of Israel's faith; namely, the conviction of a personal life beyond death. Whatever, then, be the precise history of the idea of immortality in Israel, whatever be the exact force of the rather obscure references to the subject, one point is clear; namely, that the belief in a future life was a logical outcome of the Jewish religion; it was a natural and warranted, even if slowly developed, conclusion from Israel's faith in God and estimate of man. In this development we note two significant approximations to Christian conceptions: (1) salvation is not national or corporate only, but individual; and (2) salvation has reference not only to this life, but to that which is to come.

We must now consider two questions which have been already suggested: How far was salvation regarded as salvation *from sin?* and, How was recovery from sin to be accomplished? The changes which we have sketched — the weakening of the national idea, the disappointment and suffering of the people in exile, and the increased importance which was attached to the relation of the individual to God — would all tend to deepen the sense of personal sinfulness and to correlate the idea of salvation with that sinfulness. Naturally enough, it is in the Jewish Hymn-book where this conception of salvation comes to its most intense expression.[1] But it is prominent also in the prophets, especially in the "prophets of individualism" (W. A. Brown), Jeremiah and Ezekiel. A prominent feature of the New Covenant will be that each man will directly and personally know Yahweh, and he will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more (Jer. xxxi. 34). The promise of individual forgiveness is coupled with the promise of national restoration, "I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned against me, and whereby they have transgressed against me" (Jer. xxxiii. 8). The thought of personal salvation from sin is prominent in Ezekiel. Salvation is cleansing, the bestowal of a new heart, the gift of a new spirit (Ezek. xxxvi. 25–27; xxxvii. 23). Scarcely less pervading is the thought of salvation from sin in Deutero-Isaiah. Yahweh is the Saviour of his people; he delights in forgiveness, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake; and I will not remember thy sins" (Is. xliii. 25. *Cf.* xliv. 22; Zech. xiii. 1). Here we have a distinct approximation to the Christian doctrine which always conceives of salvation as being, primarily, salvation from sin and its consequences.

Much more difficult, however, is our second inquiry: How is salvation accomplished? On what grounds and conditions is it realized? In an effort to answer we shall have to consider the place in the prophetic conceptions of four elements: (1) the divine grace; (2) repentance; (3) inward renewal; and (4) vicarious suffering.

The grace of God is *the ground* of salvation. It is according to God's nature to show mercy to mankind. The prophets express this idea by saying that God saves men "for his own sake" (Is. xliii. 25), or "for his name's sake" (Jer. xiv. 7; Ps. cvi. 8), that is, by reason of what he is, because it is his nature so to do.

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[1] See, *e.g.* Ps. xxxix. 8; li. 10–12; lxxix. 9; cxxx. 7, 8.

The "name" in the Hebrew mode of thought is the symbol of the meaning or essence of that for which it stands. Accordingly we read that it was for his name's sake that he delivered Israel from Egypt (Ezek. xx. 9).

The description of the religion of Israel as a legal system is apt to imply some exaggeration of this element in its character. As the spirit of prophecy died out in the centuries immediately preceding the advent of Christ, legalism and ritualism more and more prevailed and became the dominant characteristics of religion. These tendencies came to their full fruitage in Pharisaism. The current popular theories of this later time which conceived religion to consist in tithings, fastings, and the like are frequently reflected in the pages of the New Testament. This was the legalism which Jesus denounced and against which Paul inveighed.

But it would be quite erroneous to impute the character of this legalism, without qualification, to the Old Testament religion as such. Even the law, including the sacrificial system, was based on the principle of grace. The contention of the apostle Paul that, as between grace and law, the former was primary and fundamental (Gal. iii. 17, 18), is amply justified by the Old Testament in all its parts. It is out of his mercy that God gives the law and prescribes and accepts the sacrifices. The whole system assumes that God is inherently merciful. That he was propitiated by the sacrifices or by any other means, in the sense of being rendered merciful or of being thereby made willing to forgive, is a conception which is not only unwarranted by any Old Testament statement, but fundamentally opposed to all the presuppositions of Israel's religion. The absence of any such conception of propitiation is one of the marks which distinguishes Judaism from heathenism.

Nor was this mercifulness or undeserved favor of God conceived by the prophets as a rival or antithetic principle to his rectitude or severity toward sin. On the contrary, they are often associated in such a way as to suggest that they are regarded as two aspects of the same character.

Amos deduces the penal severity of God from his love, "You (Israel) only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities" (Amos iii. 2). For Hosea the motives of God's choice of Israel are righteousness, judgment, lovingkindness, and mercy (Hos. ii. 19), as if they belonged inseparably together. To Joel the God whose anger flames out against sin is, at the same time, "gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy" (Joel ii. 13). In wrath he remembers mercy (Hab. iii. 2). The conception that retributive justice is the fundamental, essential quality of God, and that mercy is a secondary and optional attribute whose operation has to be secured or provided for by means of some "plan" or "scheme," is not only without warrant in the Old Testament, but is entirely irreconcilable with the Hebrew idea of God in the classic period of Israel's religion. It is more accordant with the conceptions of late Jewish theology as illustrated in popular Pharisaism.

The only conditions of salvation which the prophets prescribe are such as are expressed in the words "repentance," "faith," and "obedience." While assuming the legitimacy of sacrifice, they do not, as we have seen, recognize its necessity for salvation. Their attitude is reflected in the Psalmist's words:

> "Sacrifice and offering thou hast no delight in;
> Burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required."
> (Ps. xl. 6; *cf.* li. 16.)

To them, also, "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart" (Ps. li. 17). The Deuteronomic legislation evinces the prophetic spirit in teaching that so soon as Israel turns to the Lord and obeys his voice, he will pour out upon the people the fulness of his favor (Deut. xxx. 1–10). Isaiah calls upon the people not to offer sacrifices, but to forsake their sins, which, though they be as scarlet, shall be made white as snow (Is. i. 11–18). Ezekiel is equally emphatic in teaching that repentance and renunciation of sin are the indispensable conditions of securing the divine blessing (Ezek. ch. xxxvi). Not that there is any merit in repentance; not that it establishes any claim upon God. His favor is free and undeserved (Is. xliii. 25). Forgiveness is according to his nature, and repentance for the sin which bars its exercise is simply its necessary correlative.

We have only another aspect of the same doctrine in the teaching which emphasizes faith or trust, since faith is only the positive side of repentance. As repentance is remorse and sorrow for sin, so faith is the assurance of forgiveness and acceptance with God. It was from an Old Testament prophet that Paul derived his motto text, "The just shall live by his faith" (Hab. ii. 4), that is, by his constancy, his fidelity, his trust in Yahweh. In the prophets, as in the Psalms, this idea is expressed in no technical form, but in a considerable variety of phrases, such as trusting Yahweh, trusting in his name, waiting upon him, and the like (Nah. i. 7; Zeph. iii. 12; Is. viii. 17). While we have not here the formal doctrine of justification by faith, we have its essential elements in the teaching that God's chief requirement is that men should put their trust in him and cleave to him in hope and confidence.

Another element of the same teaching is that which insists upon the necessity of obedience. Here the prophetic spirit is well expressed in the saying, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. xv. 22). No single word better summarizes what God requires of man than the word "obedience." Jeremiah depicts Yahweh as perpetually calling to his people every morning, saying, "Obey my voice" (Jer. xi. 7). The most grievous sins will be forgiven to those who amend their ways and obey the voice of the Lord (Jer. xxvi. 13). Obedience is readily seen to be the counterpart of repentance and the consequence of faith. One who turns from sin must turn to holiness, that is, to the life of obedience to God. So trust in God necessarily passes over into obedience, the making of the divine will at once the law and the delight of the soul. What obedience is conceived to include will depend upon the religious conceptions which are dominant at any given time. We have already seen that for the prophets it consisted, primarily, not in outward rites, but in a good life. True obedience, as conceived by them, cannot be better described than by the words: "To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God" (Mi. vi. 8).

We turn next to the inquiry: What place do the prophets assign to the idea of an inward renewal by a divine operation? We find that the righteous life is not regarded merely as a matter of human striving and achievement. Man must, indeed, freely turn to God, but he turns in response to influences and incentives which always anticipate his choice and action. "Turn thou me, and I will turn" (Jer. xxxi. 18) is the prayer of the penitent. Yahweh writes his law in the heart (Jer. xxxi. 33); he bestows a new heart, and puts his spirit within men, causing them to walk in his statutes and keep his judgments (Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27). He imparts the breath of a new life to the dry bones which the prophet saw in vision (Ezek. xxxvii. 1–14), and they live again. This conviction that God must renew the heart by the work of his Spirit comes to its most striking expression in the Psalmist's prayer:

> "Create in me a clean heart, O God;
> And renew a right spirit within me.
> Cast me not away from thy presence;
> And take not thy holy spirit from me.
> Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation;
> And uphold me with a willing spirit."
> (Ps. li. 10–12.)

This whole Psalm illustrates a close approximation, in Old Testament piety, to the Christian doctrine of regeneration. The sense of sin is here so deepened that the suppliant feels keenly his own impotence. God must cleanse him if he is to be cleansed. Hence the prayers: "Blot out my transgressions; wash me from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin" (*vv.* 1, 2).

It is doubtless true that a considerable part of this language has a collective, rather than a personal, reference.[1] Such is clearly the case, for example, in Ezekiel's description of the revival of the dry bones. The exilic prophets never lost sight of the national prospects and the national ideal. Still, the deepening and ethicizing of the idea of salvation could not but give that idea a bearing for the life of the individual. It is impossible to conceive of men repenting, obeying, and trusting Yahweh merely *en masse*. The very inwardness of the righteous life, as the prophets conceived it, gave it a personal character. A nation may be ceremonially righteous, but it cannot be morally so except by the purification in heart and life of the individuals which compose it.

One other prophetic idea claims our attention: salvation by vicarious suffering. The classical illustration of this idea is found in the picture of the suffering Servant of Yahweh in Deutero-Isaiah. Adumbrations of the idea are found in Jeremiah. The faithful and true were suffering the consequences of others' sins. "Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquities" (Lam. v. 7). But it is only in the exilic Isaiah that the conception is elaborated. In his earlier chapters he introduces Yahweh's Servant Israel, as fulfilling a divinely appointed mission of revelation and salvation to the world.[2] As the description proceeds, darker colors play into the picture. The Servant sees the trials which must attend his work. His very fidelity will involve him in contempt and suffering. The description culminates in that idealization of Israel as the oppressed and suffering, but victorious and saving Servant of God which we find in chapters lii. 13–liii. 12.

This description has its historical motive in the experience of Israel in exile. The disobedient did not suffer; they did not lament the national disaster or interpret it as a divine chastisement. It was the faithful who felt the exile as a calamity and a punishment upon the nation; it was they who smarted keenly under the severity of their heathen masters. Thus the good portion of the nation suffered what the faithless really deserved. But Yahweh must have a purpose to serve in this experience of his faithful ones. By this fiery trial he must intend to purify and save the nation as a whole and, specifically, to recover the careless and faithless. Thus the faithful remnant — those who represent the ideal Israel — become the saviours of the rest. They thus accomplish the divine will in the redemption of the nation, and so in the accomplishment of the nation's mission to the world. This company of God's true servants, collectively and ideally viewed, are here personified as an individual. He shall deal wisely and achieve victory (lii. 13–15). Men shall see that though despised and rejected, he had borne not his own but their sins and sorrows in order to bring to them peace and salvation (liii. 1–6). For no fault of his own did he suffer, but only for others' good. It was the divine will that he should thus pass through the depths of humiliation and chastisement in order to win the triumph of suffering love in the salvation of many (liii. 7–12).[1]

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[1] See J. V. Bartlet, Art. *Regeneration* in Hastings's *D. B.*

[2] *E.g.* xlii. 6; xlix. 6.

We have here a new element in Jewish Messianism: the idea of the righteous suffering with and for the guilty in order to secure their salvation. It is to be noted that the office of the Servant is prophetic, not priestly. It is the suffering of actual experience which falls upon him. The vicariousness is ethical. The blood of this offering is the blood of real life. If we are to use the word "substitution" we should say that the substitution here involved is that which takes place when one puts himself under another's burden, and from love and sympathy makes that other's suffering lot his own. This idealization of God's holy Servant is not created out of materials drawn from the Levitical ritual, but was produced out of Israel's experience of trial and suffering, illumined by an invincible faith in God's purpose of grace.[1]

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[1] It is not intended to suggest that the Servant designates merely the pious kernel within Israel. I understand the term to designate the nation as a whole, not, indeed, in its concrete character, but in its ideal intention and destination as God's messenger to the nations. But this conception of the nation as a whole appears to have been developed from the experience of the few in their endurance of suffering on account of, and on behalf of, the many. See the thorough investigation of F. Giesebrecht, *Der Knecht Jahves des Deuterojesaia* (Königsberg, 1902), whose view (like that of Kautsch, *D. B.*, Vol. V., p. 707 *sq.*) is that Is. liii. 1 *sq.* is to be understood as spoken by the Gentiles, and that Israel's sufferings in exile are thought to be designed for *their* benefit, rather than for the benefit of Israel itself.

Let us now summarize the elements of prophetic teaching which approximate most closely to the Christian doctrine of salvation. They are chiefly these: (1) Salvation is not primarily a national or collective, but an individual, affair. (2) It is, above all, an ethical process — the recovery of the life from sin to harmony with God through moral likeness to him. (3) The conditions on which this salvation must be realized are, accordingly, moral. Man cannot be set right before God by any ceremony or transaction performed on his behalf. He must personally repent of his sin and forsake it. (4) But in so doing man can never anticipate the grace of God, nor does he achieve his salvation without the divine aid. (5) The experience of the righteous bearing the sins of the unrighteous in Israel is adapted to suggest the thought of a divine vicarious suffering in which a greater than human love should take the woes and burdens of sinful men upon itself.

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[1] One reference only to the ritual is found. His soul is made a guilt offering (liii. 10) (not "offering for sin," as in our versions). This offering was an act of reparation. The reference to it here contemplates the sin as an affront to God's honor which, however, is sustained, as if in reparation, by the life of the righteous Servant. The textual difficulties of the verse as a whole are very great. Duhm says, "Es ist zweifelhaft, ob wir jemals den ursprünglichen Wortlaut und Sinn herausbringen." *Comm. in loco.* The apparent reference to the cultus in lii. 15 (Eng. vss., "So shall he *sprinkle* many nations") disappears in the translation adopted by almost all exegetes, "so shall he cause to rise up in admiration, that is, startle (R. V. marg.) many nations."

CHAPTER III

THE TEACHING OF JESUS ACCORDING TO THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

WE now approach the question: What does salvation mean in the teaching of Jesus? He declared that he came to seek and to save the lost. Just what was it which he came to do, and by what means did he propose to accomplish it? He frequently expressed the purpose of his mission in another set of terms of which we should here take account. He came to found the Kingdom of God and to induce men to enter it.[1] To be saved and to enter the Kingdom of God must mean substantially the same. He also spoke of men becoming sons of God and of being like God. In view of such expressions there is hardly room for doubt as to what the idea of salvation was as it lay in the mind of Jesus. It is the life of obedience to God, or, more fundamentally stated, it is the life of sonship or moral likeness to God. Jesus came into the world to save men in the sense that he came to win them, to help them to the living of the life of fellowship with God and of likeness to him.

Now this general and rather formal statement requires for its elucidation a study of several questions: What is man to be saved *from* and why does he need to be saved? What is he saved *to?* If to obedience or likeness to God, what does that involve? On what terms and conditions may this deliverance take place? What must a man *do* to be saved? And finally: How does Jesus effect this salvation? By what means does he promote or procure that harmony with God which constitutes man's true blessedness, here and hereafter? We shall try to answer these questions in the light of the teaching of Jesus as reported in the Synoptic Gospels, reserving for later consideration the Johannine version.

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[1] I have reviewed in detail the passages bearing on our present subject in *The Theology of the New Testament*, Pt. I., chs. ix. and x., to which I refer the reader. I shall take for granted a general familiarity with the texts.

The reason why men need to be saved is that they are morally lost. They need to be saved from sin. Jesus, indeed, spoke of men being saved from sickness and from suffering, but prevailingly he described salvation as a moral recovery from an evil life. He did not speak of sin and sinners in that technical sense common in his time, according to which "sinners" denoted a class almost as definite as "publicans." For Jesus the term "sinner" did not classify a man in public estimation or social standing; it described his moral state in the sight of God. Sin is a corrupt state of the heart, a perversion of the will and the affections, a radical disharmony with God. More concretely, it is lovelessness, that is selfishness, with the evils which it engenders. Jesus did not give definitions or theoretic descriptions of sin, but his treatment of individual cases leaves us in no doubt as to what sin is. It is seen in the unfilial life of that lost son who repudiates all his natural obligations to his father and friends, abandons all restraints, and gives himself over to a life of selfish gratification. It is seen in the Pharisee with his counterfeit piety, trying for social advantage to seem what he inwardly knows he is not. It is seen in the hardness, the cruelty, the intolerance of the rich and ruling classes of the age; in the pitilessness of a priest and a Levite who put social distinctions above humanity, and in a people who carefully observe their inherited traditions and tithe mint and anise and cummin to the neglect of judgment, mercy, and the love of God. These are examples of sin as Jesus views it. They are the "lost" who are forfeiting their lives in selfishness in its various forms, — pride, hypocrisy, sensuality, cruelty, hatred. All these sins are but various phases of that self-gratification or self-will in which man loses his real, true self.

From this kind of life men need to be saved. This can be done in but one way, — by a change in their motives and purposes. The sinful life can only be abandoned by being replaced. Love must supplant selfishness; kindness, humility, and sympathy must replace hardness, arrogance, and indifference. Men are to be saved to the life of service and helpfulness; they must learn that to give their lives is to save them.

Jesus' idea of salvation centres in his idea of God. His most characteristic description of God is as the bountiful Giver. With liberal hand he pours out his blessings upon all mankind. His love is large and generous. He is ready and eager to bestow his gifts. This impulse to give and to bless springs from God's boundless, universal love. Jesus' favorite expression for this aspect of God's character is the term "Father." As the Father he loves and blesses all men — even his disobedient and sinful children. He yearns for the lost son and waits and watches for his return; he continues to love those who are indifferent, or even hostile, to his will, and sends his Son to seek and to save them.

Now salvation means a life corresponding to this character of God. Jesus expressed it by the phrase "becoming sons of the Father" (Mt. v. 45). Sonship in the Hebraistic mode of thought denotes moral kinship and likeness. Jesus shows how by niggardliness, pride, and hatred men prove themselves to be no true sons of God. When they love only those who serve them, hate their enemies, and revenge every injury, they show themselves no better than the despised publicans and heathen. Such is not the Godlike life. He is the righteous, the truly saved man who has become like the Father in love and self-giving. Jesus illustrates in detail the elements which constitute this true righteousness or salvation. They are such as humility, meekness, aspiration after goodness, mercifulness, purity, peacemaking. These qualities constitute that real righteousness which is the passport into the Kingdom of heaven (Mt. v. 3–9, 20).

Other descriptions tally with this. In the judgment parable the accepted are those who have loved and served others; the rejected are those who have neglected and despised their fellow-men (Mt. xxv. 35 *sq.*). The man who fulfilled Jesus' law of neighbor love was he, social outcast though he was, who ministered to the poor sufferer at the roadside (Lk. x. 36, 37). The first and great commandment, which summarizes the whole import of the law and the prophets, is the law of love. In comparison with the requirements of this law all sacrifices and other religious ceremonies are of slight consequence. Love is the law, not, primarily, because God enjoins it, but because it is the principle of his own moral perfection. His requirements are grounded in his nature. The life of love is the Godlike life; it is the life of sonship; it constitutes men members of the Kingdom of heaven; it is salvation.

This teaching of Jesus which I have thus sought to summarize is no mere sentimental doctrine. It is not wanting in strictness and severity. It does not minimize the requirements of holiness. If the statement of it appears to do so, this is due to the fact that Jesus does not separate righteousness and love, as later thought has done. To him these are never contrasted and rival terms. He knows nothing of a love which is not holy and morally exacting; nothing of a righteousness which is mere retributive justice. For him purity is as truly a part of love as mercifulness. Love exacts confession and repentance for wilful injustice as truly as it demands readiness to forgive (Lk. xvii. 4). Love is no mere easy good nature. It rebukes and punishes evil, while it yearns to forgive and cure it. There is no lack of strenuousness in our Lord's doctrine of salvation. The divine love repudiates and condemns sin, and there is no salvation which is not salvation from sin to holiness.

What, then, must a man do in order to be saved? He must repent of his sins and forsake them. The first word in Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom was, "Repent ye" (Mk. i. 15). But not only must men repent; they must turn (Mt. xviii. 3) — turn away from the old life, and in humility and self-surrender take up the life of obedience to God. Both these aspects of the matter are expressed in the term "faith" — faith in God or belief on Christ himself. Faith is the positive counterpart of repentance. In the parable of the Lost Son penitence is illustrated in the prodigal's remorse and misery; faith is the resolution and act of returning to his home and his father. Our Lord's descriptions of the conditions of salvation are not abstract and formal, but concrete and realistic. Men must become as little children in humility and trustfulness, must take his yoke of instruction and discipline upon them, must bear his cross of sacrifice and service, must do the will of the Father, must take up the duties of membership in his Kingdom and cultivate the virtues required by its law, must become like the Father himself whose perfection is love.

Such are some of the principal ways in which Jesus spoke of salvation. Men must become and live as God's true sons, obedient to his will, trustful in his care, morally like him in motive and purpose. Jesus had no favorite formula by which he expressed the nature and conditions of salvation, such, for example, as justification by faith. It may be due, in part, to this fact that so far as our popular and theological terminology for the discussion of the subject is scriptural, it is derived much more largely from the language of others than from that of Jesus himself. But neither did Jesus analyze the process of attaining salvation nor define its various steps and stages. He made no attempt to describe the coöperation of the divine and human factors in the saved life. He pictured the Father's house as standing open, and the Father's heart as ready and waiting to receive the wandering, lost son. It lay within the power of the erring son to forsake his evil life and escape his wretchedness by returning to his Father with a penitent and obedient heart. When one recalls the subtleties connected with the theological discussions of the *ordo salutis*, the teaching of Jesus on the subject does seem, in comparison, very simple. One cannot read theological books without meeting frequent intimations of its inadequacy. We are told, for example, that Jesus could not unfold his full doctrine of salvation until his own saving mission to mankind was completed, or, even, that the final doctrine of salvation could not be unfolded by our Lord at all, but only by those who came after and could look back upon what he had done to save men. To expect an adequate doctrine of salvation in the teaching of Jesus (it is said) is to look for an unnatural anticipation; it is to require an anachronism. Is this contention intended as an indirect confession that the current theological theories have only a slight or uncertain connection with the teaching of Jesus?

We shall keep these questions in mind as we proceed. Meantime, they suggest our next inquiry: In what way did Jesus present himself as the Saviour of men? By what means did he seek to bring men into the life of sonship to God? To this question, as to the preceding, we can give no one definite, explicit answer. The saving work of Jesus is expressed in a great variety of forms. He came to call sinners to repentance. He bade men learn of him that they might find rest unto their souls. In his mountain sermon he depicted the nature and requirements of true righteousness, the conditions of entrance into the Kingdom of God, and the characteristics of its members. These cannot be easily summarized in any formula; but we may say, in general, that the discourse demands moral purity, humility, charitableness, and kindred virtues, and does not scruple to require "good works" in one who would glorify the Father in heaven (Mt. v. 16). In one place he declares that only he who does the will of God can enter his Kingdom, and elsewhere he prescribes the law of service as the law of that Kingdom. When we further observe that he conceives his own mission as a mission of service to humanity, we see that one of his saving works was to induce men by example and influence to live the Godlike life of self-giving, in which man's true greatness and glory are found. He appeared among men as their servant; he came to minister and to give his life for others. He must have regarded it as a part of his saving work to induce others thus to save their lives by giving them.

Jesus evidently contemplated his teaching and example as saving in their effect upon men. He sought by these means to quicken in men desires and efforts for a better life — the life of sonship to God, which is salvation. He presented a conception of God which was attractive and adapted to move the heart to penitence for sin and to gratitude and obedience. He illustrated the Godlike life among men in his benevolent works, in his sympathy with suffering, and in the encouragement which he gave to every good aspiration and endeavor. He set the highest value upon small deeds, if done from love or pity, and declared that he who even received into his favor a righteous man because he was a righteous man, should receive a righteous man's reward. The life of Jesus, with its various expressions of itself in word and act, was a powerful saving agency in his time, and still remains such. The teaching of Jesus gives us no warrant to speak so slightingly as is commonly done of his *mere example.* Theology is generally so eager to hurry on into its own special sphere that it can barely take time to mention in passing the saving power of the personal influence of Jesus, making haste to assure us in the midst of the allusion that *this is not all.* We shall reach the favorite province of theology in due course; only let us not minimize by silence or by qualifying words what Jesus placed in the very forefront of his message to mankind, — the declaration that the door of God's Kingdom stood open before them that they might enter then and there if they would, and that he had come to show them the way. I am the world's light; by me men know the Father, God's Kingdom is in your midst — by such words as these Jesus announced a present salvation, available at the moment, and himself as the guide to its realization.

Now, at length, we come to the question with which theology has been chiefly occupied: What significance for his saving work did Jesus attribute to his sufferings and death? Let us first review the passages in which he speaks of his death, and then inquire into their significance. It was quite late in his public career, according to our sources, when he began to teach his disciples that he must suffer death (Mk. viii. 31; Mt. xvi. 21). His Galilean ministry was nearing its close, and he was soon to set his face toward Jerusalem. While he was on a journey through the north country, occurred the memorable confession of his messiahship by Peter at Cæsarea Philippi. It was at this turning-point in his own career, and at this crisis in his disciples' faith, that he took occasion to tell them plainly that he was destined to suffer and to die. After this time the same announcement is repeatedly made.[1] All the Synoptics also report in the narrative of the early Galilean ministry a figurative saying which appears to contain a reference to his approaching fate: "But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then will they fast in that day" (Mk. ii. 20 = Mt. ix. 15 = Lk. v. 35). If the reference in this passage as it stands is to his own death, as seems probable, it is difficult to reconcile it with the long silence of Jesus which follows, with the disciples' resistance to the idea, and with the statement that it was at Cæsarea Philippi that Jesus "began to teach" his disciples about his death. It is probable, then, that this verse either belongs in some later connection, or is an allegorizing application of the parabolic saying to which it is appended, the product of subsequent reflection on the part of the disciples.[2] Other passages,[3] sometimes appealed to in support of the idea that Jesus *early* foretold his death, are seen, on examination, to be quite irrelevant. The evidence, however, is sufficient to show that from Peter's confession onward, Jesus explicitly foretold his death,[4] and it is extremely probable that his conviction in regard to his fate was not new when, for the first time, he announced it at Cæsarea Philippi. The passages thus far referred to, however, say nothing about the saving import of his death. But there are two others which explicitly connect his death with his saving work — the saying in which he declares that he came to give his life "a ransom for many" (Mk. x. 45 = Mt. xx. 28), and his reference to the purpose of his death at the institution of the memorial Supper (Mk. xiv. 24; Mt. xxvi. 28; Lk. xxii. 19, 20).

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[1] Lk. ix. 31; Mk. ix. 31 and par.; x. 33 and par.; xii. 8 and par.; xiv. 8.

[2] *Cf.* Hollmann, *Die Bedeutung des Todes Jesu*, p. 16 *sq.*

[3] *E.g.* Mt. v. 10–12; Lk. vi. 22 *sq.*

[4] The genuineness of the passages which constitute this evidence is well discussed by W. L. Walker in *The Cross and the Kingdom*, pp. 37–63.

Now the questions which one would like to answer regarding this subject are these: Can we derive from the general teaching of Jesus, or from the course of his life, any plausible view of the significance which he would naturally attribute to his death? What is the meaning of the phrase, "a ransom for many" (*λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν*)? In what sense was his body broken (or "given") and his blood shed "for" (*ὑπέρ*) the disciples (Lk. "for you") or "for many" (Mk. and Mt.)? In what connection, if any, do these expressions stand with Old Testament conceptions? How far do we have here, or in other relevant passages in the Synoptics, materials for a theory respecting the saving power of the cross?

Let us start from a point on which all will be agreed. Jesus often represented the true life of sonship to God as a life of humility and of service, and referred to his own career as the typical illustration of it. The giving of life is not to him the mere experience of dying. It is rather that self-giving for others, which ends in larger life. There can be no doubt that Jesus connected his death with the idea of his service, his self-giving, to mankind. He came to minister and to give his life. He is to die in the service of men.

If, now, we ask in what way Jesus would naturally have been led to the conviction that he must die a violent death at Jerusalem, the most reasonable answer is that he would reach this conclusion from the increased hostility which he met with in his work. He saw the jealousy and hatred of the rulers and influential classes deepening around him day by day. What more natural than for him to conclude that his career must end in a violent death? This supposition agrees with the actual course of events, and our sources suggest no other explanation. If it was in this way that the prospect of being put to death opened before him, it would be altogether natural that he should see that experience as a part, or culmination, of his service of self-denying love to mankind. And this, as we have seen, is the light in which he contemplates his death.

We should expect, however, that one who, like Jesus, regarded his life-work and experience as providentially appointed, would look upon even this violent death which he saw impending over him, in the light of a divinely ordered event, and such we find to be the case. The necessity that he should suffer many things and be killed is, to his consciousness, something more than a certainty arising from the circumstances in which he finds himself placed; it is included in the divine purpose which is the source and warrant of his mission. The effort to determine the ground of that necessity and to show what was accomplished by our Lord's submission to it, is the great motive of the various theories regarding the saving import of his death. So far as these theories have made use of materials derived from the Synoptics, they have been constructed almost exclusively upon inferences drawn from the ransom passage, the words of Jesus at the Supper, and the exclamation on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Before we turn our attention to these sayings, however, I would suggest the inquiry whether we may not best approach these particular texts and our general problem from a consideration of Jesus' conception of his life-work as a whole. Leaving aside for the moment our immediate subject, I will illustrate the method which I have in mind. Every student of the Gospels knows the difficulty of reaching any clear and consistent view of Jesus' teaching concerning his parousia from a study of the relevant texts taken by themselves. The only hope of a solution for the difficulties is found in a study of Jesus' conception of the nature and coming of his Kingdom. In this way we obtain a test or measure by means of which the various individual apocalyptic sayings may be estimated and interpreted. In like manner, is it not more probable that we shall find the right clew to Jesus' own thought of the import of his death by keeping close to his own predominant conception, than it is that we shall find it by inferences derived from word studies of *λύτρον* and *διαθήκη*? But let us turn to the much-debated words and phrases.[1]

Jesus and a company of his disciples were making their way toward Jerusalem. He knew that the end was near. There, under the very shadow of the cross, James and John proffered their ambitious request. In reply he told them that to exercise power was the prerogative of world rulers, but that the law of his Kingdom was service, and then added, "For verily the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mk. x. 45 = Mt. xx. 28). What does the phrase "ransom for, or instead of, many" (*λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν*) mean? It would seem from the occasion which gave rise to the saying of which it is a part, as well as from the connection, amounting almost to parallelism, in which it stands, that it must be intended to express some phase or aspect of that ministry or service in which Jesus sums up the purpose of his mission. But, in fact, exegetes and theologians have generally isolated the phrase and have made it the subject of painstaking special study.

For its explanation, recourse has commonly been had to the Old Testament through the Septuagint. There the word *λύτρον* is most frequently the translation of one or the other of two Hebrew words, one of which denotes the redemption price paid to secure the freedom of a slave, the other the "covering" or sacrificial gift (*kopher*) which was made to atone for sin. Now, the theories of the meaning of our phrase have usually been drawn from one or the other of these supposed Old Testament references. But when it had been decided which of these two possible meanings to adopt, nothing was really settled. If the former, it still remained to ask: Is λύτρον to be taken literally or figuratively, and is ἀντί to be joined with λύτρον only or with the whole phrase? If with the latter, the question remained whether λύτρον denotes a covering by expiation or by protection? But one's confidence in this whole method of explanation is somewhat shaken when he observes that λύτρον is used by the Seventy to translate four different Hebrew words. Moreover, when we recall that Jesus spoke Aramaic, and not Greek, it is clear that the question which is of real importance here is not which Septuagint meaning of λύτρον is most feasible, but of what Aramaic word λύτρον is the probable translation or equivalent. Hollmann has, I think, given cogent reasons for believing that it was not the Aramaic cognate of *kopher*.[1] If this view be taken, then the explanation would need to be derived either from the other Septuagint terms most frequently translated λύτρον (some form of the roots פָּדָה, *to ransom*, or גָּאַל, *to deliver* or *save*), or (if the explanation of the word be no longer sought in the Septuagint) from the Aramaic equivalent for the actual Syriac renderings of λύτρον (akin to the Hebrew root פָּרַק, *to set free*).[2] In either of these cases the meaning of the term would be a purchase price, a payment to obtain freedom, or, dropping the figure, a means of freeing or saving. If λύτρον meant a sacrifice, then ἀντί might naturally mean "instead of"; if, however, it denotes a purchase price, the force of ἀντί would probably be, "for" in the sense of "in exchange, or compensation, for," as in Heb. xii. 2: "who for (ἀντί) the joy that was set before him," that is, in order to obtain the joy, "endured the cross," etc. The passage in question would then mean: He gave himself as a ransom price for (the sake of purchasing or obtaining) the freedom of many; through giving his life he procured the deliverance of many. On general grounds this seems to me to be the more reasonable view. It is much more natural that, in the connection in which he is speaking, Jesus should introduce a figurative expression like that of giving his life to procure men's freedom, than that he should define his work in terms drawn from the Levitical ritual. The occasion and context of the phrase in question should not be lost out of mind. He is contrasting worldly greatness with *true* greatness. Worldly rulers find their greatness in "lording it" over others, that is, in subjecting them; he, on the contrary, achieves his greatness through ministering and setting men free. They enslave; he liberates.

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[1] The topics which, in the remainder of this chapter, are briefly discussed, are treated at length from different points of view by Hollmann, *op. cit.;* R. A. Hoffmann, *Der Tod Christi in seiner Bedeutung für die Erlösung ;* Feine, *Jesus Christus und Paulus ;* R. J. Drummond, *Apostolic Teaching and Christ's Teaching;* Babut, *La Pensée de Jésus sur sa Mort d'après les Évangiles Synoptiques*, and Holtzmann, *Neutest. Theol.*, in which the literature of the subject is extensively cited.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 105 *sq.*

[2] So Hollmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 108, 109.

But if we conclude that the natural meaning of the phrase is: I came to give my life as a means of procuring the liberty of many, it still remains to ask: *From what* does Jesus liberate men by means of his death, and how does his death accomplish or aid that liberation? Our sources afford no direct answer, and we are left to inference and conjecture. The most various replies have been given: From the wrath of God; from the guilt of sin; from sin itself; from the fear of suffering and death; from bondage to such worldly and selfish thoughts as James and John had just been expressing. If, now, we lay aside the figurative form of the expression, the idea with which we have to deal is this: the death of Jesus is a means of delivering men. We have seen that he regarded his death as part and parcel of his saving mission, the culmination of his life of service and self-giving. It is obvious, then, that we cannot ascribe to his death some meaning which isolates it from his life and work in general. Jesus not only never made any such separation between his life and his death, but he distinctly connected and correlated them. The saving import of his death is generically the same as that of his life.

Now the purpose of his life was to save men from sin, or, in other words, to make them members of the Kingdom of God. How did Jesus conceive that his death would serve this end? Did he mean that after his death, and largely in consequence of it, many who had thus far rejected him would repent of their sin and so fulfil the condition of entrance into the Kingdom of God? Did he foresee that, though his death seemed at the moment to be the disproof of his messiahship, it would soon be seen to be the chief evidence of it? Was his thought that his death incurred in absolute fidelity to his divinely appointed life-work, was the consummate proof of the divine love and so the highest expression of love's constraining power? Did he conceive of his experience of death as a victory over death, alike for himself and for those who would choose and live the kind of life which he had illustrated? As I have said, we are here in the field of inference. What is clear to me is that the saving power of his death is to be understood in the light of the aim and import of his life of which it is the consummation. In this view we shall seek for the meaning of such language as we are considering neither in the popular Jewish notions associated with the sacrificial ritual, nor in the dogmatic reflections of later times, but in Jesus' own explanations of his coming and his work. He came to found the Kingdom of God in the world. He died in the achievement of that result, and his death was a potent means to its achievement. He came to die, if his death was necessary to that result, as it proved to be. But the direct aim of his coming is uniformly represented as the recovery of men to sonship to God. How his death, in point of fact, has served this end, and still serves it, is a pertinent inquiry which we shall keep in mind. The result to which we are brought is, negatively stated, that the whole circle of later dogmatic ideas — atonement, penalty, substitution, satisfaction — has no place in the teaching of Jesus, so far as we have followed its development. But shall we, perhaps, find these conceptions in his language at the Supper or in his exclamation on the cross?

The earliest account of the words of Jesus spoken at the Last Supper is that given by Paul (1 Cor. xi. 23–26). Assuming that the bread and wine are regarded as symbolic or representative, the sayings which he reports would contain these two points of importance for our inquiry: (1) the bread is to remind the disciples of his death for (ὑπέρ) them, on their behalf, or for their benefit; and (2) in the shedding of his blood the New Covenant is established and sealed. Luke's version is almost identical with Paul's (xxii. 19, 20). Mark (xiv. 23, 24) has formal variations, but no really different features. In these three[1] earliest forms of narration the sense in which he is to die "for them" or "for many" is as undefined as is that of the statement that by his death he would procure the release of many. In Matthew, however, the meaning of ὑπέρ is rendered more precise by the addition of the phrase, "unto (εἰς) the remission of sins" (xxvi. 28), that is, in order to secure the forgiveness of sins. Various considerations have led many critics to the opinion that this phrase is really an explanatory addition of the author's own.[2] The fact that it has no counterpart in any of the three earlier narratives, either in the form or the substance of their reports; the absence from the account of the covenant sacrifice referred to in the context, of any idea that by its means forgiveness is procured,[3] together with its apparent kinship to later reflection and its isolation in the teaching of Jesus in general — these facts, I say, do warrant serious doubts as to its authenticity. But if it be treated as genuine, it still requires to be interpreted. It is not at all evident on the face of the statement in what sense, or in what way, the death of Jesus secures the forgiveness of sins. Before raising that question, or even before deciding whether our narratives contain anything which requires us to raise it, let us ask two others: (1) What is the relation of the Supper to the Passover meal? and (2) What is its relation to the covenant sacrifice which appears to be alluded to in all the narratives?

The Synoptics place the Supper in evident temporal connection with the Jewish Passover meal. Paul regards the Supper as a Christian Passover (1 Cor. v. 7), and according to Luke, it is so designated in advance by Jesus himself (Lk. xxii. 15). But it is a question which has been much debated, whether the Passover was a sacrifice or not. Assuming, as the more probable view, that it was such, it seems to have lost that character in actual usage in our Lord's time, and to have become only a joyful feast in celebration of the nation's deliverance from bondage. But, apart from that question, it is noticeable that the words of Jesus at the Supper do not seem to allude in any way to the meaning of the Passover festival. The symbolism employed is not derived from the Passover lamb, as it naturally would have been if Jesus had had in mind a parallel to the Passover feast. Many scholars therefore doubt or deny any inner connection between the Supper and the meaning of the Passover.[1] But if we may not be warranted in going so far as this, we may say, with Holtzmann, that the language of Jesus on the occasion in question does not seem to establish any connection with the Passover beyond "the general thought of salvation."[2]

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[1] Or two, if Luke's narrative be regarded as a replica of Paul's.

[2] "The words 'for the remission of sins' have been added; they are probably of the nature of a comment, expanding what is implied in the earlier form." Rev. H. L. Wild, in *Contentio Veritatis*, p. 140.

[3] *Cf.* Ex. xxiv. 8.

It is rather to the sacrifice offered in connection with the ratification of the covenant at Sinai (Ex. xxiv) that the words of institution clearly relate. It is generally agreed that this was a sacrifice betokening fellowship with Yahweh. As the blood of that offering was conceived as the symbolic bond of connection between Yahweh and his people, so Jesus pictures his death as the act whereby the New Covenant is inaugurated and his blood as that whereby it was sealed. The Supper is, then, the symbolic ratification of the New Covenant, analogous to the solemn rite by which the ancient covenant was confirmed by an offering denoting the establishment of communion with God and participation in the blessings of his grace. If regard be had solely to the language of our Lord at the institution of the Supper, it must be admitted, I think, that it is adapted to carry our thoughts not in the direction of the current Jewish ideas of propitiation by sacrifice, but rather toward the conception of a new relation of fellowship with God and obedience to him constituted by Jesus' death. Apart from the phrase reported by Matthew alone ("for the forgiveness of sins"), we might say, with Titius, that the words of Jesus at the Supper are not to be explained by thoughts which relate to the forgiveness of sins, but by those which relate to the impartation of life.[1]

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[1] *E.g.* Jülicher, Grafe, Spitta, Haupt, and Hoffmann.

[2] *Neutest. Theol.* I. 299.

This rapid review of the points of exegesis and criticism which are in controversy is sufficient to show what considerations are to be kept in mind as we proceed. It must be apparent how limited is the material in our Synoptic Gospels to which we can appeal in our effort to answer the question: What was the saving significance of Jesus' death? As between the older interpretations which found there the idea that his death was regarded by himself as a substitutionary sacrifice which satisfied the divine anger at sin and so procured its forgiveness, and such conclusions of modern scholars as have just been cited, the decision must turn mainly on the meaning of the word "ransom," the question of the originality of Matthew's added phrase, and the inference drawn from the cry on the cross. It is well known that the traditional theology has understood that cry as expressing Christ's sense of desertion by God in his experience of bearing the world's sin.[2] To me it seems more accordant with the import of this Old Testament exclamation (for such it is; Ps. xxii. 1), as well as more congruous with Jesus' view of the reciprocal relation between the Father and himself, to suppose that abandonment to suffering, rather than abandonment to God's displeasure or to desertion, is meant. It is a word from a Psalm in which the sufferings of the righteous for the wicked are depicted.[1] The feeling of the righteous man that God is "far from helping him" (*v.* 1), which finds strong expression in the exclamation in question, scarcely warrants the conclusion that God had actually "deserted," that is, turned away his face from him. Such a supposition would be entirely out of harmony with subsequent expressions of confidence in God's presence and help (*vv.* 4, 9, 19). That any one, on the basis of Jesus' teaching alone, should have been led to associate with those words the idea that Christ was conscious of God's displeasure or believed that God had withdrawn his presence from him, is to me quite inconceivable.

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[1] *Neutest. Lehre v. der Seligkeit*, Th. I. p. 150. Hoffmann reaches a similar conclusion as the result of his investigation. He regards the elements as symbolizing fellowship of life with Christ.

[2] So, *e.g.* Dale, *Atonement*, p. 61 *sq.*: "Exile from the joys of God's presence," etc. A more cautious statement is made by Professor Denney, who finds "something unrealizable and even impious" in Calvin's view that "Jesus endured in his soul the dreadful torments of a condemned and lost man." *The Death of Christ*, pp. 63, 64.

Supposing, now, that we allow the originality of Matthew's phrase, it needs, as I have intimated, to be interpreted. How Christ's death promoted or secured the forgiveness of sins is not stated. It may be held that the only natural meaning is that he procured it by making a satisfaction for sin, by dying as the sinner's substitute. Something would here depend, however, on how far we should read the phrase in the light of subsequent reflection. On every other theory, however, which attaches saving value to Christ's death, it would hold good that his death was *εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*. The case, then, stands thus: There are three phrases in question. The supposed sacrificial reference in the first phrase (*λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν*) depends upon a very doubtful view of its connection with Septuagint usage, and the supposed substitutionary idea upon a strict construction of a term which is, in all probability, a figure of speech. The second phrase ("for remission of sins") is of questionable originality, having no counterpart in Paul, Mark, or Luke, and is not, in any case, explicit in its bearing on our question. There remains the exclamation noticed, whose relation to our inquiry must be admitted to be remote and uncertain.

I have no inclination to minimize the material in our sources which is available for our study; I could wish that it were much more abundant and more explicit. But I desire to estimate it critically for just what it is, neither more nor less. I must say that I return from every review which I make of it with a new impression of the degree in which later theological theories have read their presuppositions and conclusions into the words of Jesus. I cannot help doubting whether the current ideas of dogmatic tradition — that of his death to procure the forgiveness of sins by placating divine justice, for example, could ever have been derived from the words of Jesus which the Synoptists report, if, indeed, they could ever have been suggested by them. Of course these ideas may be true, nevertheless. It is even conceivable that Jesus shared this thought-world in common with the Judaism of the period; but, if so, the evidence of the fact has not been preserved to us. To me it seems more likely that his thoughts about his death attached themselves to the picture of the Servant of Yahweh, whose function, as we have seen, was prophetic rather than priestly. One conclusion, at least, seems open to no doubt. In treating of our subject, theology has built too exclusively upon a few doubtful phrases and has too much neglected the general drift and content of Jesus' teaching regarding the nature and method of salvation.

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[1] *Cf.* Is. liii.

CHAPTER IV

THE PAULINE DOCTRINE

PAUL'S general conception of the nature and conditions of salvation is the same as that of Jesus, although it is developed much more largely with reference to a future day of assize. Salvation is deliverance from sin and is realized in a life of holiness. Its initial conditions are repentance, renunciation of sin, and trust in the grace of God which has been manifested in Christ. But this general conception is developed by the apostle with a fulness and variety of statement which are quite unparalleled in the New Testament. Not only is Paul's teaching the most elaborate which has been preserved to us from the primitive Church; it is also the earliest type of doctrine, if regard be had to the date of the writings in which it is embodied. When, therefore, we raise the question: What were the views of the first Christians regarding the salvation wrought by Christ, and especially respecting the saving value of his death? it is evident that Paul must be one of the sources of our answer. We may gain some impressions touching the thoughts of the first disciples on this subject from the closing chapters of the Synoptics. More important still for our purpose are the reports of the apostolic discourses in the early chapters of Acts. But Paul's written statements antedate these sources, and his relation to the primitive apostles was more direct than that of the authors of these narratives. The date and authorship of the Epistle of James are too uncertain and its aim too purely practical to warrant any effort to bring it to bear upon our problem. With respect to 1 Peter it must be admitted that criticism has made so strong a case for the theory that it was produced under Pauline influences, that one hesitates to appeal to it as illustrating primitive Christian ideas.[1]

Our sources of information for determining what were the primitive Christian views regarding our subject — especially the death of Jesus — are by no means so adequate as we could desire. But we shall be likely to learn as much, at least indirectly, from Paul as from any other source. On one capital point he is explicit: The primitive community had established a connection between the death of the Messiah and the salvation of men from sin. Nothing less than this can be meant by the statement, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3). He here asserts that the representation of Messiah's death as a means to the forgiveness or removal of sins held a primary place in that trustworthy tradition which he had received — a tradition which reached back to Jesus himself. The emphasis which the apostle places upon the cross in his doctrine of salvation is regarded by him as accordant with the belief and teaching of the primitive Christian community.

As has been intimated, we have only limited resources for illustrating the views which were taken of their Master's death by the first disciples. The Gospels make it clear that as the prediction of the event had struck them with dismay, so its occurrence had overwhelmed them in despair. It was the resurrection which enabled them to recover from their disappointment and to regain heart and hope. After that the disciples began to see that the death was only the shadow side of an experience through which the Christ must pass to his exaltation. He must pass through death in order to conquer death and achieve his victory and his crown. They began to see the necessity that he should suffer, of which he had spoken, in a new light. "Behoved it not the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory?" (Lk. xxiv. 26). And now that they have caught sight of the idea that even the catastrophe which they dreaded and deplored had a place in the purpose of Providence, that which lies next to hand is to search the Scriptures and see if death has a place in the prophetic picture of the Messiah. Jesus is said himself to have set them upon this course of explanation (Lk. xxiv. 27, 44–46); but the early chapters of Acts contain the one particular account which we possess of the way in which they developed this scriptural argument.

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[1] In my *Theology of the New Testament* (Pt. III. ch. ii; Pt. IV. ch. vii) I have reviewed the passages which bear upon our present theme more particularly than I here have space to do. To the appropriate chapters of this book I would, once for all, refer the reader for a survey of the texts which relate to each New Testament topic. Similarly I would refer to Holtzmann's *Neutestamentliche Theologie* for the fullest exhibit of the views of recent (especially German) writers on each subject.

In the earlier discourses the death of Jesus is represented as a great crime on the part of the Jews. God, however, thwarted their purpose to destroy him by raising him from the dead. But even the sins of men may be made to accomplish the divine designs. Messiah's death, though a crime when viewed from the side of the human motives which prompted it, was, from the divine point of view, according to "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts ii. 23). Next emerge in this preaching traces of the application to Jesus of the picture of the suffering Servant (Acts iv. 27; viii. 32–35). This description was not applied to the Messiah by the Jews of our Lord's time,[1] and our Gospels amply attest a fact which we know from other sources, that the idea of a suffering Messiah was abhorrent to the Jewish mind. But the "logic of events" had opened the way for the Christians to a new view of the nature and method of Messiah's work. Christ's own words about the fate which should befall him had suggested the necessity of this new explanation, and the resurrection had made it possible for the disciples to receive and develop it. And now when they opened the Scriptures and found there the portrait of a Sufferer who gives his life for others, all that had happened emerged into a new light. With the popular Jewish conception of the availability for others of the benefits arising from the sufferings of righteous men, the first disciples were familiar. If, then, the great men of Israel have suffered vicariously, why not the Messiah? In this way the very event — Messiah's death — which to the Jewish mind refuted Jesus' claim, came to be, for the believing community, the bulwark of their faith, and so the cross became the symbol and the glory of the Christian cause.

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[1] See Schürer, *Jewish People*, Div. II. vol. ii. pp. 184–187.

The early chapters of Acts, then, show us that the first disciples had attained the clear conviction that Messiah's death was a necessary part of his divinely appointed experience. They had not only adjusted their minds to the fact of his death, but had found how to justify its necessity from Scripture. The sayings of Jesus about his life given as a ransom for many and his blood shed for many, the picture of the Servant suffering for others, and the current conceptions of the vicarious sufferings of the righteous, all conspired to the conclusion that he died to save men from their sins. But when we ask: In what way? How did they conceive of his death as availing for this end? — it is not easy to find an answer. Certain it is that these discourses do not represent Messiah's death as a satisfaction for sin, or as, in any sense, a substitute for sin's penalty. The phrases in the description of the suffering Servant which would most naturally lend themselves to the expression of such ideas are not quoted, such as: "The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all;" "His soul is made a guilt offering for sin." The most definite statements which we have are these: God sent his holy Servant to bless men in turning them away from their iniquities (Acts iii. 26); God has exalted Jesus to his right hand to give repentance and remission of sins (v. 31); every one who believes on him shall receive remission of sins (x. 43). In another place Christ's suffering is appealed to as a reason why men should repent that their sins may be blotted out (iii. 18, 19). In no case, in these discourses, is the death of Christ represented as the ground of forgiveness. The one condition of salvation which is specified is repentance. The death is described as a motive to repentance and a means of turning men away from sin, but its saving value is not more closely defined. The exaltation is emphasized as strongly as the death in these passages, and repentance is quite as much the consequence of both as is remission. Christ is exalted to give repentance and remission; he suffered that men might be led to repent in order to obtain remission (v. 31; iii. 18, 19).

When, therefore, turning back to Paul's statement in 1 Cor. xv. 3, we ask: In what sense did the primitive disciples believe that "Christ died for our sins"? we find no materials which furnish a clear answer. Paul could hardly have meant that his own philosophy of the subject had been defined and held from the beginning. The data in our possession would give no warrant for such a claim, if, indeed, they could be reconciled with it. It is only by a large use of conjecture that we can reconstruct the primitive Christian views of the saving significance of Messiah's death. The argument which would show that in Christ's teaching, and in the apprehension of the first believers, the death was viewed as satisfying the divine wrath against sin and so laying a basis for forgiveness, must rest, primarily, upon a strict construction of the word *λύτρον*. It may appeal to the phrase reported by Matthew, "for the forgiveness of sins," but (assuming its genuineness) the early discourses in Acts furnish no warrant for the judicial interpretation. Certain as it is that the first Christians clothed the death of Christ with saving significance, it seems to me equally certain that they did not associate with it ideas of substitution or of penalty. This meaning is found in the few relevant words and phrases in the Synoptics and the Acts only by improbable interpretations, and by reading back into them the concepts afterward wrought out by Paul and by later ecclesiastical theology. This is a conclusion to which the known facts which bear upon it seem to me to lead. It is evident, however, that this conclusion cannot determine our estimate of later developments.

In Paul we first find the elements of a philosophy of the death of Christ and of its relation to the salvation of men based upon an analysis of the divine attributes. This interpretation is reared upon Jesus' words about his death being necessary on men's behalf, upon the primitive apostolic idea that it was included in the divine purpose, and upon the conception of vicarious suffering and merit which was found in Isa. liii, and which had been developed in later Jewish thought.[1] Paul's answer to the question, Why does the death of Jesus possess saving value? is, in its substance, that by it he has satisfied the divine wrath against sin so that it need not now be asserted in the punishment of sinners. In Paul the death of Christ is the primary saving deed. It was for the direct purpose of dying in order to atone for the sins of mankind that he came into the world.

What is the apostle's justification of this view? Between God and sinful man there is a mutual hostility. Sinners are the objects of God's enmity (Rom. v. 10; xi. 28)[2] and they, in turn, are hostile to God (Rom. viii. 7; Col. i. 21). Hence any reconciliation, καταλλαγή, which is accomplished between them must be two-sided. Not only must man renounce his hostility to God, but God must change his attitude toward man — must relinquish his wrath and resentment. Now God himself undertakes to accomplish, in and through Christ, this twofold reconciliation (2 Cor. v. 18, 19; Col. i. 20, 21; Eph. ii. 16). He originates and man receives the offer and the gift of reconciliation. Through the death of Christ, God opens the way for man to enter into a new relation to himself. Instead of the former relation of mutual hostility, a new relation has become possible — that of favor, instead of wrath, on God's part, and that of obedience, instead of rebellion, on man's part. In view of what Christ has done, God ceases to reckon the sins of men to their account (2 Cor. v. 19). Since by his death the divine righteousness, which is the principle of penalty, has been adequately expressed and the divine displeasure against sin amply vindicated, God may now restrain the operation of his wrath against sinners and open the way to their acceptance and forgiveness. Christ was "made sin" on man's account (2 Cor. v. 21), that is, he so came under the action of the divine wrath against sin, so experienced the consequences of sin, that God's justice is thereby vindicated and satisfied.

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[1] On the idea of the vicarious sufferings of the righteous as elaborated in late Judaism, see Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums*, p. 181 *sq.;* Dalman, *Jesaja 53 das Prophetenwort vom Sühnleiden des Heilsmittlers*, especially ch. ii; Weber, *Jüdische Theologie*, chs. xix and xx. I published a translation and condensation of these chapters of Weber's work in *The Old and New Testament Student* (now *The Biblical World*) for July and August, 1889. Weber's sources are, for the most part, later than the New Testament period, but they illustrate the development of an idea which must have had a long history. Illustrations may be found in 2 Mac. vii. 38: "I pray that, for me and my brethren, the wrath of the Almighty may cease, which has justly gone forth upon our whole race"; 4 Mac. vi. 28: "Be gracious to thy people; let the punishment which we endure on their account suffice thee. Let my blood serve for them as a purification; take my life as a reparation for their life." *Cf.* i. 11; xvii. 20–22; xviii. 4; 4 Ezra viii. 26 *sq.* According to Josephus, *Antiquities*, I. xiii. 3, Abraham expects that the undeserved suffering of Isaac, when he shall have been offered as a sacrifice, will redound to his advantage.

[2] In both these cases ἐχθροί (enemies) is passive, as the context shows. In the first it is explanatory of the state of being objects of God's wrath referred to in the previous verse; in the second it is the contrast of beloved (of God), ἀγαπητοί; the correlation is: objects of wrath (enemies) — objects of gracious favor (beloved).

The view maintained by Ritschl[1] and some other theologians, that the righteousness of God which Christ expresses by his death (Rom. iii. 25), means, in Paul's view, God's gracious purpose of salvation, seems to me to be exegetically untenable. Paul's idea of the righteousness of God, in this passage, appears to me to be that of self-affirming, governmental justice. Its action as depicted in passages like Rom. ii. 5–10, 16; 2 Cor. v. 10; 2 Thess. ii. 6–8, illustrates the same general conception. The connection of thought in which "the exhibition of his righteousness" is set is decisive against the interpretation in question. This manifestation of righteousness in Christ's death is set over against a seeming laxity in God's treatment of sin in past times. Now, however, by the shedding of Christ's blood, his hostility to sin is so expressed and vindicated that it need not be further satisfied in punishment. These thoughts proceed upon the supposition that God can only forgive on the condition that the judicial reaction of his nature against sin has been asserted as fully as it would have been in the punishment of sin. It is true that Paul never writes: Christ has reconciled God to us, but that is not because he does not conceive of the death of Christ as founding a new relation of God toward men. It may well have been because Paul is always eager to bring out the fact that it is God who originates the reconciliation. The statement in question would not have emphasized that idea, and might even have seemed inconsistent with it. Nevertheless it does represent an element of the Pauline thought. It might be expressed by saying, God has, by the death of Christ, provided a way for reconciling himself to the sinful world.[1]

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[1] *Rechtfert. u. Versöhn.* II. § 15.

Let us note more particularly the significance which is attached to the shedding of Christ's blood. In his violent death, says the apostle, he was set forth before the world as an *ἱλαστήριον*, which most naturally means either a propitiatory offering (*sc. θῦμα*), or, more generally, a means of expiation. The view of Ritschl, Cremer, and others, that *ἱλαστήριον* is here used as in Heb. ix. 5 and the Septuagint, to denote the *kapporeth*, or mercy-seat of the ark of the covenant, is, to my mind, quite improbable.[2] If that meaning had been intended, the word would have required the article, and perhaps *ἡμῶν*.[1] Moreover, the meaning which Ritschl deduces: the manifestation-place of the divine mercy, does not suit the connection of ideas. Christ is set forth as an *ἱλαστήριον* in the shedding of his blood in order to exhibit the divine righteousness, which demonstration was necessary to show that God was not lax in his treatment of sin, as might seem to be the case from his passing over sins committed in earlier times. The etymological meaning of the word is: a means of rendering favorable (*ἱλάσκεσθαι*) *expiatorium*, *Sühnemittel*, and that is the only meaning which suits the context here. Other passages confirm this view. Men are justified and saved from wrath by the shedding of Christ's blood (Rom. v. 9); his giving of his life is regarded as the payment of the price by which men's release from sin is purchased (1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23; Gal. iii. 13; iv. 5). Whatever "ransom" and "covenant offering" may have meant originally, there is no doubt that we have here the idea of satisfaction by substitution. Paul has not, however, expounded this conception in terms of the sacrificial system to any such an extent as might have been expected. It has been possible for some interpreters to maintain, with considerable plausibility, that he did not regard the death of Christ as a sacrifice.[2] Ritschl, on the contrary, reads the whole Pauline doctrine in terms of the sacrificial system, but so explains these terms as to give quite a new interpretation of Paul's teaching. His exclusion from the sacrifices of any reference to sin and its forgiveness yields a view of Paul's doctrine which makes it mean that in Christ God is persistently pursuing his eternal purpose of grace. But whatever the sacrifices may have meant, this was not what Paul thought to be the sole or immediate import of Christ's death. It appears to me that in his language we may note so many traces of Jewish sacrificial ideas that we must suppose that this system supplied to his mind suggestive illustrations

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[1] Commenting on Paul's use of the word ἱλαστήριον in Rom. iii. 25, Professor Sanday writes: "When we ask, who is propitiated? the answer can only be 'God.' Nor is it possible to separate this propitiation from the death of the Son." *Comm. on Romans*, p. 91. Whether this idea, which (if genuinely Pauline) meets us in no other biblical writer, is congruous with the teaching of Jesus, or available for Christian theology, is a question which, for the present, remains open.

[2] Deissmann in his *Bibelstudien*, p. 121 *sq.* (Eng. trans., p. 124 *sq.*), has reënforced the argument against this explanation of the word. He shows that it is not accurate to represent the word ἱλαστήριον as the equivalent of *kapporeth* in the Septuagint. The strict equivalent of *kapporeth* is ἱλαστήριον ἐπίθεμα. Now it is true that the noun often falls away and the adjective is used substantively to represent *kapporeth;* but in such cases a theological word is simply used as a periphrasis or gloss upon the meaning of the cover of the ark. It signifies, quite generically, *a propitiatory article.* From the equation of words (Wortgleichung) it is entirely unwarranted to conclude to an equation of ideas (Begriffsgleichung).

[1] *Cf.* 1 Cor. v. 7: *τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν ἐτύθη Χριστός.*

[2] So Pfleiderer, *Paulinismus*, p. 144; W. H. Ward, *Bib. Sac.* 1894, p. 328 *sq.*

of certain aspects of Christ's work. We hear such echoes of sacrificial language as the following: "He gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odour of a sweet smell" (Eph. v. 2); "Our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ" (1 Cor. v. 7). In other passages he is spoken of as delivered up to death, — language which suggests the offering up of a sacrifice (Rom. viii. 32; Gal. ii. 20). If it were certain that *θῦμα* is to be supplied with *ἱλαστήριον* in Rom. iii. 25, and *θυσίαν* with *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* in Rom. viii. 3, then these passages would be additional illustrations; but these are doubtful interpolations. We can only say that while Paul has made a less frequent and explicit use of sacrificial ideas than we should have expected, it is clear that the system supplied one of the forms of thought by which he interpreted Christ's death, and, further, that, so far as Christ was thought of as a sacrifice, he was conceived as substituted for the sinner in death. If he has not especially brought out this idea in connection with his allusions to sacrifice, he has done so in other ways, and the inference that this was his conception of Christ's death, viewed as a sacrifice, is quite inevitable. I cannot doubt that for the mind of Paul the shedding of Christ's blood relates his death directly to the sacrificial circle of ideas.

In Gal. iii. 13 we have a reference to the death of Christ in which special emphasis is placed upon the instrument of death, namely, the cross, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Here the allusion is to Deut. xxi. 23, where it is said that the body of a criminal who has been executed on a gibbet shall not be left exposed overnight lest the land be defiled, because a body so put to death is accursed of God and therefore a source of pollution. Now Paul uses this idea of the curse connected with the cross as a means of relating the death of Christ to the divine law. The law declares a crucified one accursed; therefore in dying on a cross Christ endured a curse, or, as Paul realistically expresses it, "became a curse on our behalf," and by enduring the curse which the law pronounces upon transgressors (iii. 10), has delivered us from liability to the same. The closest analogue to this passage is 2 Cor. v. 21, where Christ is said to have been "made to be sin on our behalf in order that we might become the righteousness of God in him." The meaning is that he was put in the place of sinners; that in his death he so endured the penalty of sin, or the equivalent of that penalty, that its infliction may be withheld from those who will accept the benefits of this substitutionary experience. The wages of sin is death; Christ on man's behalf has vicariously endured death, — and in that ignominious form of it which in the law involves a curse, — and now that the penalty has been paid, the demands of the law are satisfied and the way to forgiveness opened.

We have here essentially the same mode of thought as in the passages in which the death of Christ is correlated with the justice or wrath of God. The law is contemplated as the codification of those demands which arise out of the holy nature of God. The verdict of the law has been proclaimed against sin. If this sin is to escape punishment, it must do so because some other way is found of manifesting the divine displeasure and of satisfying the law's demand for its punishment. This way God himself provides in the vicarious endurance of death by Christ. The premisses of this argument are unmistakable, and the conclusion is as inevitable as it is clear. To Paul's mind there is, in the nature of God, an obstacle to forgiveness which can never be overcome until sin has been virtually punished. The law's curse impends over man until it is inflicted and endured. But Paul stops short of a conclusion to which this course of argument seems to be carrying him. He does not say that Christ was personally accursed or that he endured exactly what sinners would have endured in punishment. This conclusion would have been a *reductio ad absurdum*, for Christ was sinless and could not be punished. Paul evidently regarded his death as the equivalent of punishment in that it expressed the divine righteousness and satisfied the law as fully as punishment would have done. Hence Christ was "made sin," not a "sinner"; he was regarded or treated as a sinner in so far as he was taking the sinner's place in suffering. Paul says that he became "a curse," not that he endured "the curse of the law"; that is, he had the experience of one accursed, but did not suffer the personal displeasure of God. Paul's argument undoubtedly carries him to the very verge of the view that Christ suffered the precise penalty of sin — a conclusion which later dogmatic thought felt compelled to draw from his premisses; but he carefully avoids it, since it would be fatal to his doctrine of Christ's person. Were Christ's sufferings, then, in Paul's view, penal? The answer depends upon the definition of "penal." In the strict sense of the word, they were not. Penal means, having the character of punishment. Now punishment implies guilt, and Christ was guiltless. But Paul did regard Christ's sufferings as serving the ends of punishment and as a substitute for the punishment of the world's sin. In his sufferings God manifested and vindicated his holy displeasure against sin as adequately as he would have done by its punishment. It would not misrepresent Paul's thought to say that he regarded Christ's sufferings as representatively penal or as involving penal consequences. He took the sinner's place and endured his lot, namely, death. This vicarious experience meets the moral ends of punishment; but it is evident that, since he was sinless, his sufferings could not have the moral qualities of punishment for him, nor could God entertain revengeful feeling toward him personally. Paul's theology was juridical. God must secure the satisfaction of his law before he can forgive. The operation of grace is conditioned upon the assertion of justice. And yet these contrasts are really transcended in Paul's own thought, since it is God himself who, in his love, finds a way to be both just and gracious. It is he, and not another, who provides the satisfaction. In the last analysis, God removes his own obstacles and appeases his own wrath. The very death by which his righteousness is exhibited is provided for by his love.[1] Christ's death could never have been a propitiation for men's sins except by the prior determination of God's love. "God commendeth his love to us in that Christ died for us."

But this legalist scheme which Paul wrought out of the materials of current Jewish thought is not the whole of his doctrine of salvation through Christ. In the fertile mind of the apostle his judicial and substitutionary theory has broken over its natural boundaries and has developed and expanded in various directions. To his thought the vicarious sufferer was not isolated from those on whose behalf he suffered; he was in closest connection with them as their representative and head. Paul applies this conception of solidarity to Christ in representing him as the second Adam (Rom. v. 15–19; 1 Cor. xv. 45; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15). He summed up, as it were, in himself all mankind considered as the subject of redemption. Hence, in his death, all died (2 Cor. v. 14). The substitutionary idea underlies the expression; Christ vicariously died the death of all; but, nevertheless, a new element enters with the identification of mankind with him in his death. It is the germ of the thought, which is a favorite one with Paul, that there is something in the experience of Christ which others may share — something which they may repeat in their experience. If to Paul's mind he died to vindicate justice and satisfy law, it is also true for him that he died for men that they should no longer live unto themselves (2 Cor. v. 15). We have here a suggestion of those more mystical and ethical interpretations which we shall have to consider directly.

We find that Paul also attaches saving significance to the resurrection: "For their sakes he died and rose again"[2]; he rose on their behalf, that is, for their salvation.

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[1] "Paul interpreted the death of Christ from above, not from beneath. An offering is not brought to God which shall convert him from wrath to grace — so it had formerly been conceived; but God is the Actor, the Offerer, the Reconciler, and the ground of his action is pure love, nothing else." Wernle, *Die Anfänge unserer Religion*, p. 146.

[2] 2 Cor. v. 15. Here *ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν* belongs to both participles (*ἀποθανόντι καὶ ἐγερθέντι*).

"He was raised for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25). Elsewhere the resurrection is assigned a prominent place among the contents of Christian faith (Rom. iv. 25; x. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 14, 15). What was the saving value of the resurrection? Probably they are right who hold that it was viewed primarily as the counterpart of the death, as the supreme evidence that the redemption wrought by the death was complete. It is presented rather as a motive to faith than as a basis of salvation. And yet its significance seems to have outrun the limits set by this conception. In Rom. viii. 34 it is placed in connection with the intercession; but, of course, it may be held that the intercession is conceived as based on an appeal to the vicarious death on men's behalf. In any case the resurrection not only supplies to Paul one of his strongest analogical arguments (1 Cor. xv), but furnishes the mould in which he likes best to cast his thought of the moral renewal of man. Here again we find a link of connection between the saving deeds and the ethical aspects of salvation.

Had the sinless holiness of Jesus, his perfect life of obedience to God's law, in which Paul strongly believed (2 Cor. v. 21), no saving value or effect? It is undoubtedly assumed that his sinlessness is essential to his vicarious suffering. If he had been tainted with guilt, he would have been personally deserving of death, and so could not have died solely for the sins of others. But no direct use is made of his personal holiness in describing his redemptive work. His one great act of righteousness, which Paul magnifies, is his death (Rom. v. 18). His obedience is noticed, but it is his obedience unto death (Phil. ii. 8). His "active obedience" is quite subordinate in Paul's thought to his "passive obedience." He appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh that he might condemn sin in the flesh by suffering for it (Rom. viii. 3); his obedience to the law is conceived as having for its end "that he might redeem them which were under the law" (Gal. iv. 4). In general, Paul did not greatly concern himself about the earthly life of Christ; for his mind the atoning significance of his death eclipsed all other interests. His life was but a prelude to his death.[1]

But was the work of salvation, then, for Paul wholly a matter of judicial substitution and imputation? Is it a mere payment of debt and cancellation of guilt by means of which men are freed from the curse pronounced against sin and delivered from the divine wrath? We must answer that such is not the case. Paul has another line of thought concerning the work of Christ in salvation which holds quite as large a place, and is quite as central in his teaching as the doctrine of expiation. The relation of men to Christ and his salvation is not purely passive.[2] They must enter into close life-union with him so that they live in him and he in them. They must die with Christ to sin on his cross, and rise with him in newness of life. They must complete the full measure of his sufferings. Believers constitute his mystical body and have thus a corporate identity with him, so that his life is, as it were, their life. Salvation is not alone from the guilt but also from the power of sin. Not only does it deliver from the condemnation of the law; it neutralizes the effect of the law in calling forth sin into increased activity and in weakening the will. The aim of Christ's death is not solely to atone for past sin; it is also to the end that men should renounce the selfish life and strive to realize the life of love (2 Cor. v. 15). Here the love of God, which is evinced in the death of Christ, is exhibited as a motive prompting to love in return. In this whole passage the doctrine of reconciliation by Christ's death is developed in connection with the ethical import and effect of his saving work. In his death all died to sin that they might live the new life of love.

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[1] The Pauline doctrine of expiation is expounded with substantially the same result by scholars of the most various theological tendencies. In illustration, I would refer to the following expositions: Cone, *Paul, the Man, etc.*, ch. xi; Denney, *The Death of Christ*, ch. iii; Pfleiderer, *Paulinismus*, ch. iii; Ménégoz, *Le Péché et la Redemption d'après St. Paul*, Pt. II. ch. iii; Holtzmann, *Neutest. Theol.* II. pp. 97–121, and Cremer, *Die paulinische Rechtfertigungslehre*, pp. 426–448. All these writers sustain an interpretation with which I substantially agree, though I should wish, in some cases, to distinguish very sharply between their interpretation and their estimates and inferences. To the elaborate and masterly discussion of Holtzmann I acknowledge special indebtedness.

[2] *Cf.* McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*, p. 129.

In the Epistle to the Romans the juridical view of Christ's death is developed in chapters iii–v. At the beginning of chapter vi an imaginary objection to the argument is presented: If, as you seem to say, the more sin, the more grace, then would it not follow that we should continue in sin that grace may abound? This question directs the apostle's mind to the consideration of the ethical aspects and consequences of redemption, and in the next three chapters he shows how salvation involves union with Christ and consequent freedom from sin and victory over it. Christians, in virtue of their relation to Christ, must be "bond-slaves of righteousness" (Rom. vi. 18), and must live and serve in "newness of the spirit" (Rom. vii. 6). Here certainly the salvation wrought by Christ is regarded as something more than a mere past fact, a payment of old scores; the death becomes a conquest of sin, and the resurrection a triumphant entrance into a new ethical life which the believer repeats in his own experience (Rom. vi. 4, 5; Gal. ii. 19, 20; Col. ii. 20; iii. 3; Phil. iii. 9, 10). Recipients of the benefits of his death are not only freed from guilt and condemnation, but from the actual power and effects of sin, and are enabled to live a positive life of obedience, service, and holiness. Thus "that which from the standpoint of the law and its authority appeared as an atonement for the breach of bounden duty, appears from the standpoint of the apostle's anthropological premisses as the conquest of the flesh in its hostility to God through the divine power of the Spirit."[1]

What, now, is the relation of these two representations to each other? Is the subjective-mystical view of salvation an addition, a supplement, or a transformation of the objective-juridical? Professor Bruce thinks that the doctrine of an objective righteousness, wrought out by the death of Christ, was first elaborated by the apostle; that this "met the spiritual need of the conversion-crisis," and that "the doctrine of subjective righteousness came in due season to solve problems arising out of Christian experience." Accordingly, this author speaks of them as "two doctrines," "two revelations which served different purposes." They are not regarded as incompatible or as cancelling each other, but as answering two distinct questions.[1] It is common to regard one of these aspects of the work of Christ as subordinate to the other. Probably a majority of recent scholars hold that the conception of freedom from sin through a new moral life is primary in the thought of the apostle;[2] others reverse this relation.[3] In this latter view expiation by Christ's death is the major premiss of all Paul's subsequent argument. Dr. Denney holds that all the apostle's ethico-mystical conclusions are deduced directly from Christ's substitutionary death. The sole object of his death was to atone for sin; now faith and love and all other Christian graces are the consequences of that death in the sense that they are evoked as man's response in gratitude for it. The whole experience of salvation is implicit in the believing acceptance of that death as endured for us and as cancelling our guilt. Paul's thought on the subject has but one focus and that is Christ's "finished work," his "atonement outside of us."[4] Others describe the two lines of thought as parallel or interpenetrating. "With this doctrine" (of expiation), says Lipsius, "which is wrought out in the categories of Jewish thought, is imperceptibly mingled the ethico-mystical view of the destruction of sin's dominion through the putting to death of the flesh."[5] Holtzmann says that the principal distinction between them is that the ethical view is based upon Hellenistic ideas, especially the contrast of flesh and spirit, while the expiatory doctrine is built up by the use of popular Jewish conceptions and sacrificial categories.[6]

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[1] Holtzmann, *Neutest. Theol.* II. 117.

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[1] *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, pp. 214, 215.

[2] So, *e.g.* Beyschlag, *N. T. Theol.* II. 198–201; Weizsäcker, *Das apostolische Zeitalter*, p. 139.

[3] So Pfleiderer, *Urchristenthum*, p. 229; Ménégoz, *op. cit.*, p. 251 *sq.*; Denney, *Death of Christ*, pp. 179–192.

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 185. [5] *Dogmatik*, p. 510. [6] *Neutest. Theol.* II. 117.

The fact that such differences of opinion exist among the most competent interpreters, is sufficient proof of the difficulty of defining the relations of these two lines of thought. The apostle has not united them in such a way as to show in what consisted their unity or connection for his own mind. Whether they are really one, or really two, and, if the latter, what their bond of connection is, are questions which admit of only conjectural answers. To me, however, it seems quite unlikely that the two classes of representations in question could have expressed, for Paul's own mind, two separate doctrines. The fact that they are developed independently in the Epistle to the Romans is doubtless due to the nature and purpose of the argument; elsewhere they are asserted and unfolded together.[1] And yet I must admit that the impression received by most interpreters of a certain duality of view — a judicial and an ethical method of approach to the subject of Christ's death — is not wholly without justification. It is possible, of course, to contend that the two classes of propositions: Christ died to manifest the divine righteousness, to satisfy the divine displeasure against sin, and: Christ died that men might not live unto themselves, that men might die with him to sin on his cross and rise with him to newness of life — it is possible, I say, to contend that these two classes of statements mean the same, and so to interpret them as to make them practically identical in idea. The fact remains, however, that on most minds they make a very different impression. Holtzmann offers the very interesting suggestion that the objective-juridical theory is (as we have observed) the precipitate of the current Jewish ideas of substitution and expiation applied to Christ's death, while the ethico-mystical view is the more direct product of Paul's own experience. We are reminded that his own salvation is chiefly described in terms of the latter[2] — an experience which he generalizes in his favorite teaching that all Christians died with Christ and rose with him.[3] But it is questionable if we can separate between his experience and that Jewish thought-world which had supplied the very atmosphere of his mental and religious life. With his conception of God's nature and God's law, Christ's satisfaction for sin must have been a primary fact in his experience. Still, the suggestion is a valuable one. It is unquestionably true that the juridical elements of Paul's theology, as seen in his doctrines of expiation and justification, are survivals of his Pharisaic training. They determined, in fact, the form of his religious experience as really as they did the course of his thought. But the question is a fair one, how far they were *essential* to his religious life and thinking. It is certainly a suggestive fact that Paul's juridical arguments are brought forward most prominently — one may say, almost exclusively — in his polemic against Judaizing errors and objections to the gospel. His constructive development of the doctrine of salvation is chiefly in such terms as death to sin and union with Christ. His own salvation is described as an ethical process.

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[1] *Cf.* my *Theology of the New Testament*, p. 429.

[2] See, *e.g.* Gal. ii. 19–21.

[3] *Neutest. Theol.* II. 117, 118.

Traditional dogmatic has taken over the juridical aspects of Paul's teaching and has elaborated, and even exaggerated, them into a system of substitutions, imputations, and equivalences which to most modern minds seems so artificial and repellent that many are inclined to repudiate all views which pass under the name of atonement. But whether one approve or disapprove, it is a fact that the traditional doctrine of salvation has been constructed primarily out of the survivals of Pharisaism in Paul's thought. This has been done with a certain onesidedness, with a strong, if unconscious, preference for Judaistic terms and ideas, but with a logical cogency which was more than a match for methods and efforts which sought by mere exegesis to disprove the legitimate derivation from Paul of this result. How plain it is that the question, what we shall derive from Paul, is the question, what estimate we shall put upon the various elements of his thought. The ancient theologies made their discriminations and estimates as really as modern thought ever does. They took what they wanted from the great quarry and left the rest.

Let us note an example germane to our present subject. The theory that there were in God two sets of contrasted moral attributes, summarized under the names justice and love, the former of which was primary, was not without a certain apparent justification in Pauline ideas. One may plausibly argue that the Epistle to the Romans opens with the picture of these two contrasted qualities in God standing over against each other, and that the justice or the wrath is primary, since the problem is, How may justice be satisfied, in order that mercy may operate? Here are modes of thought which were current in late Judaism, and it is evident that they still retain a strong hold on the apostle's mind. They are now taken up by later thought and developed to their logical consequences; a conflict between mercy and justice was imminent in the bosom of Deity. Justice demanded satisfaction; it would have its vengeance upon sin. Mercy yearned to save men, but was powerless. Just then Christ came forward and bowed his head to the penal stroke. Justice is now appeased and the obstacle to the operation of mercy removed. This scheme is deduced from the twofold assumption of a conflict between justice and love in God and of the primary rights of justice in the case.[1] Is it Pauline? Yes, if everything is Pauline the germ or suggestion of which may be found in Paul; if every trace of Pharisaism, every survival of the late Jewish thought-world in which he was reared is to be regarded as fundamental to his conception of the gospel. But one thing was overlooked in this argument, namely, how Paul had himself transcended his own contrast of love and justice in his Christian conviction that it was the divine love alone which found a way to satisfy justice, and that the seeming contrast thus dissolves, after all, into unity. Grace is the source of the whole redemptive procedure.

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[1] The theory is elaborated in Shedd's *Theological Essays*, p. 265 *sq.*, and *Dogmatic Theology*, *passim*, and in Strong's *Philosophy and Religion*, p. 188 *sq.*, and *Systematic Theology*, *passim*.

While in the direct exposition of the process of expiation, justice is described as if holding a certain primacy, yet in Paul's general view, taken as a whole, it is plain that love is the logical *prius* of the very idea and possibility of expiation. The death of Christ has its motive and ground in the love of God (Rom. v. 8). If attention be fixed solely on one of the special circles of Paul's thought, I grant that the scheme which has been sketched may be deduced from him; but if regard be had to his philosophy of salvation as a whole, it is plain that he does not regard Christ's death as rendering possible the operation of love, and that he does not regard retributive justice as primary in the nature of God. If justice demands satisfaction, love provides the way in which the satisfaction is made. "The element of grace," says Baur, "is so predominant (in Paul's teaching) that everything which the divine righteousness demands in the death of Jesus can itself only be considered as a consequence of the divine grace."[1]

We shall hereafter recur to the points which are here suggested. Let me, however, state in advance that the materials of Paul's Epistles should not be used, in my opinion, as they are too often used, with no professed discrimination of the sources of his various arguments and illustrations, and with no consideration of what is primary and what secondary in his system of thought. Paul was the most versatile and many-sided thinker of the apostolic age; his writings are a veritable treasure-house of Christian thought, but it must be admitted that if his language and modes of argument have been legitimately employed by traditional dogmatics, then he is chiefly responsible for a method and scheme of thinking regarding God and the world whose acceptance for the modern mind is impossible. The men of to-day can no more think in terms of late Jewish theology than they can think in terms of pre-Socratic philosophy. They can no more appropriate the outward forms of Paul's Jewish thought respecting expiation than they can adopt the cosmology or demonology which he derived from the same source.

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[1] *Paulus*, II. 167.

No scholar of our time ever thinks of adopting the allegorical method of interpreting the Old Testament because Paul, having learned that method in the Jewish schools, has employed it in some of his arguments. The apostle's great Christian convictions are obviously distinguishable from such methods of illustrating or justifying them as were incidental to his Pharisaic training. In like manner, in general, it is not only legitimate, but necessary, to distinguish — difficult as it may sometimes be to do so — between the specifically Christian and the characteristically Jewish or rabbinic in Paul. This is done, in one way or another, by all thoughtful students, though some might not readily admit the fact. Now, since, in some form, this discrimination is made, and must be made, by all students of the subject, why is it not in every way better that it should be made frankly and critically, in the light of the best attainable historical knowledge of the apostle's education and thought-world?

It is well-nigh universally admitted, and is practically assumed even where it is theoretically denied, that we must distinguish Paul's "gospel," his Christian doctrine of grace and faith, from the allegorical exegesis and Pharisaic modes of thought by which, not infrequently, he seeks to illustrate and enforce it. The same principle holds good in application to our subject. Behind the juridical apparatus of justification and expiation which was taken over from his Jewish inheritance and training, we must seek those essential ethical truths which constitute the substance of his Christian faith and teaching. Here, too, his own word is applicable, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." There can be no greater mistake than to confound the treasure with the vehicles of illustration and argument which were supplied by a rabbinic education.

CHAPTER V

THE DOCTRINE OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

Unlike the Epistles of Paul, this Epistle presents the doctrine of salvation chiefly in terms of sacrifice. Now Christ is a priest, now an offering; his blood is the blood of a sacrificial victim shed to procure the forgiveness of sins. Subjectively considered, salvation is pardon, cleansing from sin, the purification of the conscience. Although there are many important points of contact between Paulinism and our Epistle, yet the differences are more marked than the resemblances.[1] For Paul, as we have seen, the death of Christ was due to a necessity springing out of the requirements of the divine righteousness; it was necessary as a satisfaction to God's law; Christ's death was substituted for the death which sin deserved. This circle of ideas is absent from the Epistle to the Hebrews. Here Christ is a pure offering, offered in sacrifice to God, but his death is not viewed as a substitutionary expiation. The absence of this idea is the more remarkable since the author so closely approximates it. Had he shared this conception it is not easy to see why he did not bring it forward in connection with such assertions as that Christ made propitiation (ἱλάσκεσθαι) for the sins of the people (ii. 17), tasted death for every man (ii. 9), and was offered to bear away the sins of many (ix. 28). He, too, assigns reasons for the necessity of Christ's death, but they are not Paul's reasons. Not the satisfaction of the law, the removal of the curse, the endurance of the penalty of sin, but a divine fitness or decorum is assigned as the reason why the author of salvation should be made perfect through sufferings (ii. 10).

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[1] See Ménégoz, *La Théologie de l'Épitre aux Hébreux*, p. 181 *sq.*

Elsewhere he deduces the necessity of Jesus' death from the very fact that he is a priest. It is the calling of a priest to offer sacrifice; hence, "this high priest must also have somewhat to offer" (viii. 3), and that "somewhat" can only be his own life. In another place this necessity is derived from the import of the word διαθήκη. This word has two meanings, — covenant and testament. Our author passes from one meaning to the other in the elaboration of his argument. The first *covenant* was sealed by a death; in fact, wherever a *testament*, or will, goes into effect, it does so in consequence of a death; therefore it was needful that the establishment of the New *Covenant* should be ratified by a death, that is, the death of Christ. How widely different is this from Paul's juristic argument.

It lies outside our present purpose to discuss the relation of our Epistle to contemporary thought.[1] It must suffice to say that we have in it an acute and profound exposition of Christianity, on a general Pauline basis, in the spirit and method of the Alexandrian exegesis and philosophy of religion. The influence of Philo on the author's thought and language is especially marked. The relation of the Old Testament system to the New is conceived to be that of shadow to reality, of promise to fulfilment. The earlier covenant belongs to this lower, sensible world (ix. 11; xi. 3), the realm of types and shadows (viii. 5; ix. 23) which Philo called "the visible order"; Christ and his salvation belong to the upper, heavenly world of eternal reality (viii. 1, 2; ix. 1, 24; x. 1), which Philo, in the spirit of Plato's doctrine of archetypal ideas, called the κόσμος νοητός, the intelligible world. By this series of contrasts between higher and lower, shadow and substance, temporal and eternal, the author strikingly illustrates the superiority of Christianity to Judaism, and depicts the absoluteness and finality of the gospel.[2] Now the underlying idea here noticed has a certain kinship with Paul's teaching on the same subject. For both writers the law is preparatory to the gospel and finds in Christianity its fulfilment; but how differently is the process conceived and described! Paul contemplates the law chiefly in its ethical demands. It pronounces a curse on all who do not obey its every requirement; it is an inexorable avenger; consequently Christ must satisfy the law by his death, enduring a curse which was the equivalent of the curse pronounced by the law against sin, in order to open the way for the exercise of forgiveness. To our author, however, the law is a ceremonial system. Its significance is that it prefigures the perfect sacrifice which Christ makes for sins, and illustrates the lower, earthly counterpart of the supersensible, heavenly world into which Christ has entered, there to exercise the functions of a perpetual priesthood on behalf of his people. The sharp contrast between law and grace, so characteristic of Paul, is not drawn by our author, and the way in which Paul shows how, despite this contrast, the law indirectly serves the ends of grace,[1] is quite foreign to this Epistle. In Paul's view the law increases transgressions by calling out man's native sinfulness into stronger and more manifold expression. To this writer the law is simply an ineffective, because pictorial and symbolical, system of ritual purification. Hence for Paul, Christ has abolished the law; for our author he has fulfilled it. In this matter, as Ménégoz says, the writer of Hebrews is an evolutionist, while Paul is a revolutionist. These differences are quite natural, since the word "law" is used by the two writers in such widely differing meanings.

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[1] This has been done very thoroughly by Ménégoz, *op. cit.*, p. 176 *sq.*, and by Holtzmann in his *Neutest. Theol.* II. 290 *sq.*

[2] *Cf.* Denney, *The Death of Christ*, pp. 207, 208.

Other differences are equally striking. In Hebrews the death of Christ, viewed under the aspect of a sacrifice, receives an almost exclusive attention. The resurrection is as incidental to our author's scheme of thought as the category of sacrifice is to Paul's. The contrasts of letter and spirit and of flesh and spirit, which are so significant for Paul's doctrine of salvation, scarcely appear in Hebrews, and do not appear at all in the Pauline sense. The heavenly intercession of Christ, his perpetual exercise of priestly functions on our behalf, takes the place of importance which in Paul is occupied by the expiatory aspect of his death. Paul, also, has the idea of intercession, but it is chiefly the intercession of the Spirit of which he speaks,[1] and the conception is neither developed at length nor presented in terms of the Levitical ritual. Probably the nearest doctrinal counterpart in Paul to the idea of Christ's eternal priesthood in Hebrews is the conception of life-union with the risen and glorified Christ. But of that whole circle of Pauline ideas which centres in the phrase *ἐν Χριστῷ*, there is scarcely a trace in Hebrews. Even more than in Paul is the work of salvation a work done "outside of us" on our behalf. We have seen how Paul supplements this conception by his ethical mysticism. His doctrine on the juristic side is: Christ *for* us; but when he describes salvation as an actual experience, his chief emphasis is upon Christ *in* us, a mutual indwelling of Christ and the believer. This idea is not developed in our Epistle. Its nearest counterpart is the teaching that since Christ has entered into the most holy place, the immediate presence of God, and there ministers on our behalf, we may freely draw nigh to God with full assurance and may rest secure in his favor (x. 22). But in its form, at least, this teaching resembles more a leaf from Paul's juristic exposition, such as: "Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through him" (Rom. v. 9), than it does such a description of Christian experience as this: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death" (Rom. viii. 1, 2). It is quite in accord with the difference here noted that the doctrine of the Spirit receives but a very slight development in Hebrews. Our author does, indeed, speak frequently of an inner cleansing, a purification of the heart (i. 3; ix. 14; x. 22), but this is conceived to have been wrought by the death of Christ, on the analogy of the Levitical sacrifices (ix. 22, 23). If the blood of those offerings avails for a ritual cleansing, how much more shall the blood of Christ cleanse the conscience (ix. 13, 14).

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[1] See my *Theology of the New Testament*, pp. 371, 372.

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[1] Rom. viii. 26, 27; *cf. v.* 34.

This brief general comparison of the type of thought illustrated in Hebrews with that found in Paul may serve to indicate the special peculiarities of our author's exposition and to aid our apprehension of the new ideas which he brought to bear upon the subject. Other points will come to view as we proceed. Let us now undertake a systematic exhibition of this remarkable treatise on Christ and his salvation. It will be convenient to divide the general subject into the following themes: (1) the person of the High Priest; (2) his offering of himself, conceived in a threefold form (*a*) as a sin offering, (*b*) as a covenant offering, and (*c*) as the offering of the great Atonement-day; (3) his heavenly intercession; (4) the effect of his sacrifice; and (5) the faith required in the recipients of his benefits.

On the historical side the picture of Jesus in our Epistle has important points of contact with the Synoptic portrayal of his earthly life. He is described as partaking in our human lot, as obedient, tempted, and suffering, as learning obedience by his sufferings, and as typically illustrating the trust of a true Son of God in his Father (ii. 10, 14, 18; iv. 15; v. 8; vii. 28).

On the metaphysical side, however, our author's conception of Christ is more akin to that of Paul. With formal differences we have here the Pauline doctrine of Christ's descent into our world from a preëxistent state. It was he who established the house of Israel in which Moses served (iii. 3), and in the latter's preference for God's service he was enduring "the reproach of Christ" (xi. 26). Through his agency, or coöperation, God made the worlds, and from the beginning he was appointed heir of all things (i. 2). For a little while, indeed, did God subject him to humiliation and suffering that he might make atonement for human sin, but thereupon exalted him again to a throne of glory and honor (ii. 7, 9, 17).

But it is chiefly in the character and functions of a priest that Christ is described. After the description of his superiority to the angels (chs. i, ii) and to Moses (ch. iii), he is introduced in this character and compared with the priests of the Levitical system. This comparison covers a number of points in all of which his superiority to them is shown. Theirs is a changing and temporary order; his is an eternal priesthood. They must offer sacrifices for their own sins, as well as for those of the people; he is a holy, guiltless, and undefiled High Priest who has no need to make a sacrifice for his own sins, and who can therefore all the more effectively atone for those of others. They minister in this lower earthly sanctuary which is but a semblance or shadow of the true tabernacle; he exercises his priesthood in heaven itself, appearing there perpetually in the presence of God on our behalf. They are the representatives of a perishing order which is even now on the point of vanishing away; he belongs to a world of abiding reality, and is connected with a covenant which is changeless and eternal. Their ministrations can only ceremonially cleanse; they cannot really take away sins; his sacrifice has in it the power of moral renewal; it cleanses the conscience and imparts ability to do the divine will (v. 3; vii. 3, 11, 12, 16, 24, 26–28; viii. 5–13; ix. 11–15; x. 1–18).

One of the author's methods of illustrating the eternal, supramundane character of Christ's priesthood is to describe him, quite in the manner of Philo, as a priest "after the order of Melchizedek" (vii. 17). This mysterious priest-king appears for a brief moment on the stage of Old Testament history and then vanishes from view (Gen. xiv. 18–20). He meets Abraham as he is returning home with the spoils of war, pronounces a blessing upon him, receives a tithe of the spoil — and that is all. Unlike other priests, nothing is said of his pedigree or history. His coming and his disappearance are alike enveloped in mystery. He simply stands forth in his priestly character, in entire isolation. So far as known, he derived his priesthood from no other. For all that history can tell us of his office, he is "without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life" (vii. 3). But his very mysteriousness makes him a fit type of our great High Priest. His name means "king of righteousness," and the name of his residence, Salem, means "peace." The fact that Abraham paid tithes to him evinces his dignity and proves his superiority to the Levitical priests, for in Abraham's paying tithes it may be said that Levi, the head of the priestly tribe, being yet in the loins of his ancestor, paid tithes also to this mysterious priest-king, and by so doing acknowledged his superiority (vii. 5–10).

Christ, then, is a priest of this higher order, whose office is not dependent upon descent from a single tribe, but possesses a direct, divine authority and an inherent and changeless worth and effectiveness. But now the very idea of a priest is that he should offer sacrifices, hence Christ must have somewhat to offer (viii. 3), and this offering must be as much more perfect and efficacious than the Levitical sacrifices as his priesthood is superior to the order of Aaron. Beyond this point of view our author does not appear to have gone in his reflections upon the necessity of Christ's death. A priest must offer sacrificial blood; where sacrifices are, there must occur the death of the victim. Christ is a priest, and of this superior order and character; he must therefore offer a sacrifice which comports with the nature of his office; the blood of that sacrifice can only be his own, offered by means of "an eternal spirit" (ix. 14), the spirit of eternal love and self-giving. We are thus brought to a more particular consideration of the offering which Christ made.

This is the central theme of the Epistle (viii. 1). The doctrine of Christ's sacrifice is the "solid food for full-grown men" (v. 14), which the author wishes his readers might receive, and which stands in contrast with such rudiments of Christian doctrine as repentance, faith, and baptism (vi. 1, 2). In what way the sacrifices in general operate, or how that of Christ in particular atones for sin, the author does not say. He assumes the common Jewish point of view respecting the efficacy of sacrifice. It is the divinely appointed means of approach to God and of reconciliation with him. For our author this is axiomatic, and he does not attempt to go behind or beneath it. As has been indicated, he draws his illustrations from three parts or elements of the Levitical system: the ritual of the sin offering, of the covenant offering, and of the offering on the great Day of Atonement, although he does not formally distinguish them or attach to them any different significance. They all alike atone, and Christ is the antitypical counterpart of each and all of them. The axiom which underlies the whole argument is that "apart from a shedding of blood forgiveness does not take place" (ix. 22). Whether this proposition is meant in an absolute sense, or is intended as the statement of a fact of the Levitical system, is a question which probably carries us beyond the author's point of view. For him the Mosaic law was an expression, in types and shadows, of the absolute will of God. He assumed the divine origin and necessity of bloody sacrifices in Judaism and, accordingly, it was self-evident to him that in the antitypical system there must be a corresponding offering made.

The most obvious consequence of the axiom just noticed is that Christ's death was a sin offering. He has offered one final sacrifice for sins (x. 12, 18), in virtue of which men may freely draw near to God in confident trust, and through which their inner lives may be cleansed and perfected (x. 1, 22). Contemplated as the sacrificing priest, he has "made propitiation (*ἱλάσκεσθαι*) for the sins of the people" (ii. 17); contemplated as the victim, he was "offered once for all (*ἅπαξ*) to bear (*ἀνενεγκεῖν*) the sins of many" (ix. 28). The proper meaning of *ἱλάσκεσθαι* is "to render favorable" (*ἵλεως*), and this is its import in heathen literature; but it is a noticeable fact that the biblical writers avoid the direct use of the expression, "to conciliate God." This verb occurs but twice in the New Testament: in the publican's prayer (Lk. xviii. 13), in the passive, "God be propitiated, be merciful, to me the sinner"; and in our passage, where the object of the action is not a person but the sins of men. This is a modified Alexandrian use of the word in which it can no longer mean "to render propitious or favorable," but must mean, in general, "to atone for," "to expiate." What relation this action bears to the nature and, specifically, to the retributive nature of God, this loose use of *ἱλάσκεσθαι* is too vague to indicate. If the Pauline philosophy of redemption be regarded as lying behind the phrase in question, then the meaning would be, Christ by his death appeased the divine wrath against sin and thus removed the obstacle in the divine mind to its forgiveness.[1] But there is a large element of inference in this interpretation. It seems very doubtful, not only on account of the indefiniteness of the terms, but in view of the fact that the author never comments on the *modus operandi* of death in sacrifice, or introduces the Pauline idea of a penal equivalence. In the view of some we have an echo of Paul's doctrine in the phrase, "to bear (that is, to bear the penalty of) the sins of many," but the Septuagint usage strongly favors the conclusion that *ἀνενεγκεῖν* here means *to bear away*.[2] These passages assert the efficacy of Christ's sacrificial death for the putting away of sin, but I can find no philosophy of the fact in our Epistle. The conviction appears to rest upon the general assumption respecting the divine authority and necessity of sacrifice as a medium of approach to God.

It is a favorite thought with our author that the Christian system is a New Covenant. Now the Sinaitic covenant was ratified by a solemn sacrifice, "and Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words" (Ex. xxiv. 8). This covenant sacrifice furnishes another point of analogy between the animal offerings and the death of Christ. The blood of the "mediator of the new covenant" is a "blood of sprinkling" (xii. 24), whereby the hearts of men are "sprinkled from an evil conscience" (x. 22);

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[1] Holtzmann thinks this meaning is implicit in the phrase which therefore contains the "Kern des Sühnebegriffs," *op. cit.*, II. 300.

[2] *Cf. ἀθέτησις τῆς ἁμαρτίας*, ix. 26.

that is, his blood is the sign and seal of a new covenant relation with God into which men may now freely enter. It is in this connection of ideas that our author deduces from the double meaning of *διαθήκη* the twofold argument for the necessity of his death, already noticed. The first *covenant* was sealed by a death, and every *testament* becomes operative only through a death; hence in both points of view the new system required to be based upon a death. But this death must be of a higher order and greater effectiveness than those which were known to the former covenant. The mere pictures or semblances of the heavenly realities, the instruments and accompaniments of the ceremonial worship, might, indeed, be cleansed by the blood of calves and goats,[1] but the antitypes of these lower things, the heavenly localities themselves, must be purified by the blood of a better sacrifice (ix. 15–23).

The ritual of the annual great Day of Atonement furnished another point of connection between the death of Christ and the sacrificial system. The offerings of that day had a comprehensive character and significance, and served as an atonement and purification for the sanctuary, the priesthood, and the nation as a whole. On that day the high priest, having made a sacrifice for the sins of himself and his family, entered into the most holy place and sprinkled the mercy-seat with the blood of the prescribed offerings, thus "making remembrance of sins every year" (x. 3) and accomplishing an atonement for them.[2] This sacrificial order was "a parable for the time now present" (ix. 9). As the high priest entered the symbolical holy place, so Christ has now entered into the true inner sanctuary, "heaven itself, there to appear before the face of God for us" (ix. 24); and as the flesh of the sin offerings must be burned without the camp (Lev. xvi. 27), so Jesus suffered "without the gate" (xiii. 11, 12). But our author dwells more upon the differences than upon the resemblances. All these ceremonies of the great Atonement-day were only symbolical, and therefore morally ineffective. The fact that the high priest must make an offering for himself evinced his imperfection. The further fact that he alone might enter the holy place showed that the true holy of holies, the immediate presence of God, was not yet made freely accessible to all who would draw nigh to him. It is evident that such imperfect sacrifices, which are only "carnal ordinances, imposed until a time of reformation," "cannot, as touching the conscience, make the worshipper perfect" (vii. 28; ix. 7–10). This result can only be wrought by the perfect sacrifice of Christ, in which he is at once perfect priest and perfect offering. This sacrifice does not belong to this lower world of mere sensible pictures, which are really only semblances, but to the upper, heavenly world of eternal reality — to the "tabernacle not made with hands," that is to say, to "heaven itself" (ix. 11–24). He has rent the veil, that is, his flesh (x. 20), and has thereby opened the way to a free access to God. In his sacrifice we have something real, eternal, effective. His work cleanses the conscience and renews the heart (ix. 14; x. 22). It is a work which is continuous; Christ perpetually ministers as a priest on our behalf in heaven. The experience of death was, indeed, endured once for all here on earth; but this experience does not exhaust for our author the meaning of Christ's offering. The conception of two worlds, a higher and a lower, carries the import of the great sacrifice up into the world above (viii. 2). There Christ is still offering himself, perpetually giving his life for men. "So long as we think of death as the offering, we can speak only of the efficacy of the death stretching forward into the future. As soon as we substitute life, the true biblical idea of offering, for death, the thought of the life offered (the life of one who dieth no more) involves in its own nature the element of continuousness."[1]

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[1] Of a sprinkling of "the copies of the heavenly things" (for example, the book of the covenant), on which the analogy of ix. 23 is founded, no mention is made in the Old Testament account of the covenant sacrifice. Analogous sprinklings, however, are referred to elsewhere, *e.g.* Num. xix. 6, 17; Lev. xiv. 7. The conception of purifying heaven itself by the blood of Christ is due to the persistence of the idea of cleansing objects by blood under the old covenant. The analogy is pressed to its utmost limit.

[2] See Lev. xvi; xxiii. 26–32.

It is upon this idea of a changeless priesthood, a perpetual offering to God through an eternal spirit, that the conception of intercession is based. Unlike the Levitical priests, who are dying men, our great High Priest abides forever and has a priesthood which is unchangeable; "wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw nigh unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (vii. 25). It is because his office is of this higher character; because his ministry is a part of that archetypal order of which the Mosaic ritual is only a semblance or shadow, that his priestly ministration possesses this perpetual efficacy. It is because Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, a mere pattern of the true sanctuary, but into heaven itself, the higher world of abiding reality, that he now "appears before the face of God for us" (ix. 24). What relation our author conceived to exist between the one great priestly act of Christ done once for all, — the yielding up of his life on the cross, — and this perpetual, heavenly ministration, it is not easy to determine. The motive of the latter idea seems not to be the same as in Paul. For him the intercession of Christ is one element in the manifold security of the believer. Expiation, justification, intercession — such is the threefold pledge which God has given of his love (Rom. viii. 31–35). For our author, however, the idea of intercession appears to arise from the inherent character of Christ's priesthood and offering. Since these belong to the world of eternal reality, their operation must be continuous and perpetual. This intercession is clearly conceived to be something more than an appeal to a past finished act; it is not a mere perpetual petitioning, but a perpetual ministration. He is now and always a ministering priest in the true tabernacle, the immediate presence of God (viii. 2). The method of this priestly ministry is not more particularly described, and we can only say that our author has carried out his parallel between the lower and the higher orders in application to the present subject without attempting to define the relation between the current view of a single past saving deed and a constant saving activity of Christ on our behalf.

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[1] Milligan, *The Theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 144. *Cf.* the whole discussion in chapter vii.

Let us next observe the descriptions given of the effects of Christ's sacrifice. We have already noted that they are such as the putting away or bearing away of sins (ix. 26; x. 4), the purification of the heart and conscience (i. 3; ix. 14), and the sanctification of the people (x. 22). By his death he made "purification of sins"; his blood "cleanses the conscience from dead works to serve the living God"; by his offering he has "perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Now these moral effects appear to be regarded as the direct and intended results of Christ's saving work. It is possible, indeed, to argue that a juridical satisfaction of justice must be inserted between Christ's saving act and these results in order to connect them together;[1] but if so, this was a logical necessity of which the author was not aware. He may not have told us — and I do not think he has done so — how the sacrifice wrought these effects, but certainly he has not intimated that it accomplished them indirectly through an endurance of the penalty due to sin by which the bestowment of forgiveness and the procurement of its results were made possible. It seems to me clear that our author assumed as axiomatic the efficacy of sacrifice — on what ground he does not state. The Old Testament sacrifices sufficed for their purpose; they could cleanse the sanctuary, purify the flesh, and create a remembrance of sins; that is, they sufficed for symbolical and ritualistic purification. But for the actual putting away of sins, for the purifying of the heart and the renewing of the life, they were inadequate. These results only the blood of Christ can accomplish, and this it can do because of that mysterious inherent virtue, that "eternal" quality which it possesses. The apparatus of a juristic philosophy of atonement is not only wanting here, but is incongruous with the method and nature of the author's thought. The efficacy of Christ's work stands connected, for his mind, with his conception of the supersensuous, archetypal world of reality of which it is a part. For Paul Christ's death saves indirectly by providing a way of salvation; for our author it saves directly through its inherent power to cleanse the life.[1]

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[1] So Denney, *The Death of Christ*, pp. 229, 230.

The view of the Christian life presented in our Epistle is determined in part by the author's characteristic modes of thought and in part by his special aim in writing. Since the doctrine of the high priestly work of Christ is the crowning truth of his system, it is natural that acceptance of it and confidence in its efficacy should be strongly emphasized. But the Epistle is an Apology for the gospel, an argument for its superiority in comparison with Judaism, designed to dissuade the readers from lapsing into the latter. From this point of view the duty which is most urged is steadfastness or fidelity. Now salvation, considered as an experience, is chiefly described under the aspects thus suggested. Hence faith and hope are its two chief keynotes.

Of faith Christ himself is the supreme example. He is the "beginner of our faith" (xii. 2); that is, in the matter of steadfast trust in God and perfect obedience to his will he has gone before us and shown us the way. The captain or leader of our salvation was himself perfected through sufferings, passed through a career of moral trial, and learned obedience by the hardships which he endured. It is the duty of the believer to follow in his steps, to exemplify the same unshaken trust in God, the same endurance of suffering, the same confidence in the reality of invisible, heavenly things as he illustrated. Now our leader, having set this perfect example of obedience here on earth, has rent the veil which separates earth from heaven; or, in the author's favorite terms, having fulfilled his priestly office here, has now entered into heaven itself, there to continue his mediation on our behalf; it is our privilege to follow him thither. Our faith is to be like an anchor cast into that world beyond and which holds us in secure attachment to it. We see how the author's idea of faith is colored by his conception of Christ as our pattern of trust and by his Philonic view of the twofold universe, — the sensible and the supersensible world.

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[1] "Das Sühnopfer wirkt, mit Ueberspringung der auf jüd. Imputations- und Satisfactionstheorien zurückweisenden Mitglieder, direct entsündigend. . . . Nicht als ein, ausserhalb des sündigenden Menschen zwischen Gott und Christus vorgehender, Act erscheint hier die Sühne, sondern als Verleihung einer wirksamen Kraft zu realer Heiligung" (vii. 25). Holtzmann, *Neutest. Theol.* II. 304.

What, then, is the nature of faith? It is first formally defined and then illustrated in detail. Faith is a firm confidence with respect to the objects of hope, an assured conviction of the existence of invisible realities (xi. 1). Generically considered, faith is belief in a supersensuous world. The examples which follow illustrate, in various ways, this confidence in the invisible. By faith we believe in the creation of the world by the power of God — an event lying wholly beyond our observation and experience. Abel's faith lent a superior value to his sacrifice. Noah proved himself righteous by his confidence in the divine warnings, though they were not reënforced by any visible indications. Abraham and Sarah illustrated their faith by their belief in the divine assurance, in spite of the strong human probability to the contrary — and so on. Faith is an heroic trust in God; it is that confidence in invisible powers and realities which can "remove mountains" of difficulty and improbability. It therefore includes obedience, fidelity, and hopefulness. Its motto is, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope that it waver not; for he is faithful that promised" (x. 23). It is evident that this conception of faith is much more general and comprehensive than that which is common in Paul. For him faith is primarily trust in Christ and life-union with him. For our author, also, faith "looks unto Jesus" as its great example and inspiration; but prevailingly it is God himself — his promise or his favor — which is represented as the object of faith (vi. 2, 10; xi. 6). Nor is faith regarded by our author, as by Paul, as a condition of obtaining righteousness; it is rather the proof of its possession. By offering his sacrifice in faith, Abel had witness borne to him that he was righteous (xi. 4).

The writer's conception of the heavenly world as the seat of all abiding realities and the sphere of Christ's continuous saving work gives to his doctrine of faith a strong other-worldly cast. Faith looks away from the reproaches and afflictions of this present life, joyfully contemplating the loss of all earthly goods, knowing that in heaven there awaits the believer a better and a permanent possession (x. 34). Here in this lower world of instability and change, this realm of shadows and semblances, the Christian has no continuing city; but by faith he is able to hope for a permanent abiding-place in the heavenly world, a city with eternal foundations, whose builder and maker is God (xi. 10, 16). This city is the celestial Jerusalem, inhabited by an innumerable company of angels and of perfected men. There the full perfection of the believer will be realized and all his longings satisfied.

The question may be here suggested: What conception of Christ's saving work does this doctrine of faith seem to favor? Now Paul's idea of faith manifestly fits in with his scheme of imputation and satisfaction, even though on its mystical side it may be regarded as transcending it. But this circle of ideas is, as we have seen, absent from Hebrews. Faith is a persistent confidence, a steadfast adherence. To what? To the belief that a vicarious work has been done on our behalf — to an objective saving deed, done outside of us? Doubtless; but not that alone. Nor is that the aspect of Christ's work which is kept most prominently in view when the author is dwelling on the actual experience of salvation. Rather is it the present saving action of Christ which is emphasized, while faith is described not as looking back to a past saving deed, but upward and forward to the world of present eternal reality. Salvation is realized in the pursuit and attainment of sanctification, in participation in the holiness of God (xii. 10, 14). It is cleansing, consecration, completion, after the pattern of Christ. We may not question the objective, Godward aspect of Christ's work; our writer's use of the categories of priesthood and sacrifice carries that with it. But it seems to me clear that his spiritualization of these categories, his description of Christ's sacrifice as a direct power of purification, and his emphasis upon faith as, in principle, an imitation of Christ, all go to show that his doctrine of salvation has quite overleaped the limits of his own Jewish sacrificial categories and has shown itself to be in all its deeper elements an ethical and spiritual affair. As for Paul his own favorite categories of law are too narrow to contain his Christian doctrine of salvation, in like manner are those of sacrifice, for our author.

CHAPTER VI

THE JOHANNINE DOCTRINE

THE Johannine definition of salvation is "eternal life," and this life is explained to consist in the knowledge of the only true God and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent (Jn. xvii. 3). Salvation is realized in the knowledge of God and in fellowship with him. It means to walk in the light, to keep his commandments, to love as he loves. Now it is Christ who has taught us and enabled us so to live. He is the Revealer of the Father, who has interpreted to men the Father's will and nature (Jn. i. 18). It is the object of the Prologue of the Gospel to universalize this idea of Christ's revealing work. As the eternally preëxisting agent of God in creation and revelation the Logos was the depositary of the divine life and light and, like an eternal sun, was shining down into the darkness of the world's ignorance and sin, though the world in its blindness did not perceive his light. His illumining work on earth in dispensing the Father's grace and truth is but a historical manifestation of a perpetual spiritual activity by which he has been seeking to impart a revelation of God to every individual man.

This idea of salvation by revelation runs, like an undertone, through the writings under review. "I have given you an example," says Jesus; "do as I have done" (Jn. xiii. 15); "I have revealed the Father's name unto men, and will reveal it, in order that his love may dwell in them" (Jn. xvii. 6, 26). Hence he is himself the bread of life to men. It is by eating his flesh and drinking his blood, that is, by an inward appropriation of him, that men are saved.[1] The keynote of the First Epistle is the imitation of Christ: He that abideth in him must walk as he walked (I. ii. 6); the doing of righteousness is the proof of divine sonship (I. ii. 29); he whose hope is set on Christ will purify himself, even as he is pure (I. iii. 3); as he gave his life for us, so must we give our lives for others (I. iii. 16); as he is, even so are we in this world (I. iv. 17). If we have regard solely to such passages as we have reviewed, we should derive from them the idea that Jesus saves the world by illumining the world; that as the bearer of the divine light to men, he banishes the darkness of ignorance and error from their minds and reveals to them the path of truth and duty. And such *is* the author's idea; only it is not, as we shall see, his only idea concerning the saving work wrought by Christ. These writings are pervaded, at the same time, with the conviction of the necessity and saving value of the death of Christ. Let us first note the expressions of this conviction in the Gospel.

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[1] Jn. vi. 33-40. *Cf.* my *Theology of the New Testament*, pp. 225-227.

We meet the idea in question on the very threshold of the Gospel. John the Baptist proclaims the Messiah in advance as the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (Jn. i. 29). The questions most discussed concerning this passage are these: (1) Is it historical? (2) What is the meaning of "the Lamb of God"? (3) Does "take away" mean "to bear away by removing," or "to take away by bearing," that is, by enduring the consequences, or penalty, of sin? The difficulties connected with the first question are considerable. In strong contrast to the Synoptics the Fourth Gospel represents the messiahship of Jesus as apparent, and even as heralded, from the beginning of his ministry. In like manner, an intended prophecy of his death is early introduced (Jn. i. 29). It would only be according to analogy to suppose that an idea which, as matter of fact, emerged much later, is carried back behind even the beginning of Jesus' work.[1] At any rate, the choice lies between the Johannine construction of events and that which the Synoptists present. If Jesus' messiahship was acknowledged and proclaimed from the beginning, and the necessity and saving import of his death declared even in advance, we must abandon the Synoptic version of the course of events.[1]

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[1] "Der Täufer wusste gewiss eben so wenig von einem versöhnenden Tode Christi als Paulus vor seiner Bekehrung." O. Holtzmann, *Das Johannesevangelium*, p. 51. Those who maintain, *per contra*, the historicity of the words attributed to the Baptist, can hardly do so except

The article in the phrase "the Lamb of God" marks the conception as a familiar one — the Lamb of which prophecy speaks, or the Lamb of whose death for sin Christians are accustomed to speak. The word was already in current use before this Gospel was written (Rev. v. 12; xiii. 8; 1 Pet. i. 19). Now the term might be used in allusion to the Passover Lamb, or to the Servant of Yahweh, who is compared to a lamb (Is. liii. 7); or the two ideas might be combined in the expression. Paul had compared Christ's death to the paschal offering (1 Cor. v. 7), and the picture of the suffering Servant was familiarly applied to Christ (Mt. viii. 17; Acts viii. 32–35; 1 Pet. ii. 22–25). While the special significance attached in the Old Testament to the Passover offering may be regarded as favoring the first explanation, it seems to me that the phrase "Lamb *of God*" makes the allusion to the lamblike Servant of God in Isaiah liii. quite indubitable. The New Testament use of "the Lamb" as a name for Christ contemplated as a sacrificial victim appears to have primary

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by supposing a special, direct revelation to him. The idea of a suffering Messiah was not only foreign, but abhorrent, to the Jewish mind. This proclamation was, therefore, without any basis or antecedents in the ideas of the Baptist's time and circle. Meyer is doubtless right in rejecting all efforts at historical explanation (assuming the historicity of the saying), and in insisting on a special revelation concerning Jesus' death and its significance as alone adequate to explain the forerunner's words. *Comm. in loco.*

[1] *Cf.* Wild, *Contentio Veritatis*, p. 161: "We saw that the words 'for the forgiveness of sins' . . . were probably of the nature of a comment on the original words. The same may be said of the opening testimony of the Baptist in the Gospel of St. John: 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.'" The writer adds that both additions were justified, but that later thought erred "in placing the emphasis too exclusively upon the death of Jesus as the means of redemption."

reference to the picture of the Servant who went as a lamb to the slaughter; but with this is certainly combined associations derived from the Levitical ritual. It is not merely as the meek and quiet sufferer, but as the sacrificial offering that Christ experiences death. The phrase in question is probably, primarily, a reminiscence of Isa. liii. 7, interpreted in the sense which was attached to the atoning sacrifices.

The phrase *ὁ αἴρων* almost certainly means, "who removes." The Seventy use other words (*λαμβάνειν*, *φέρειν*, *ἀναφέρειν*) to denote the bearing (enduring) of sin. To take away is also the uniform meaning of *αἴρειν* in the Fourth Gospel.[1] That this is its meaning in a closely analogous passage in the First Epistle (I. iii. 5) is extremely probable from the context. It is in connection with an argument designed to show the radical antagonism between the Christian life and the sinful life that it is said that Jesus Christ "was manifested in order to take away sins," that is, to abolish them or break their power. Such is the natural import of the word on its face. It is possible, however, that in such connections as that in which it here stands, it carried or implied, for the mind of the writer, a further meaning such as the figure of the slain lamb is adapted to suggest.[2] One must judge whether this is probable in the light of other expressions.

The subsequent references to his death in the Gospel are almost all included in the sayings of Jesus himself. It may be well to grasp them up together that they may first be viewed in their entirety. The sayings are these: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life" (Jn. iii. 14, 15), with which should be compared this saying: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself" (Jn. xii. 32); "I give my flesh for the life of the world" (Jn. vi. 51); "the Good Shepherd gives his life for the sheep" (Jn. x. 11); "I lay down my life freely" (x. 18); "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit" (Jn. xii. 24); "Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn. xv. 13); "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth" (Jn. xvii. 19). To these sayings should be added the comments of the Evangelist himself on the declaration of the high priest Caiaphas, to the effect that it was expedient that some one should die for the people (Jn. xi. 48–52). In the judgment of some interpreters there is also an allusion to Jesus' death in the saying, "God so loved the world, that he gave (that is, on this view, gave up to death as a sacrifice) his only begotten Son" (Jn. iii. 16), though it is quite impossible to determine whether this and the subsequent verses (to *v.* 21) are a part of the discourse of Jesus or an explanatory comment of the author. The principal ideas in question, then, are these: the lifting up of Christ (on the cross) that men might have life or be drawn unto himself; his gift of his flesh and blood as the life-giving food and drink; his laying down or consecrating of his life on behalf of others.

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[1] *E.g.* xi. 48; xv. 2; xvii. 15; xix. 31.

[2] *Cf.* xix. 36. Holtzmann thinks this likely: "Man muss zur Uebernahme der Sühne fortschreiten." *Neutest. Theol.* II. 479.

By the lifting up of Christ from the earth the Evangelist clearly understands his elevation upon the cross. This is not only implied in the comparison with the lifting up of the brazen serpent upon a pole, but is explained by the comment: "This he said, signifying by what manner of death he should die" (Jn. xii. 33). But it is possible that a further meaning lies in the background of this explanation. The phrase "from the earth" suggests the conception of exaltation to glory and power. The combination of these two widely differing ideas would not seem incongruous to the author since he regards the way of humiliation and death as the path to glorification. *Via crucis, via lucis.* In the near prospect of death Jesus sees himself as already glorified (Jn. xiii. 31). Paul has a similar collocation of ideas when he says that Christ humbled himself to the death of the cross and *therefore*

God highly exalted him (Phil. ii. 8, 9). In this view the death of Christ, contemplated as the counterpart of his exaltation, is a means of salvation, a supremely attractive power drawing men to him. I cannot see that any expiatory idea is suggested or implied in this representation. The passages seem to say that the suffering love of Christ and the victory of that love are saving powers in human life. It is, of course, open to the interpreter to declare that they cannot be such except by a satisfaction to God's justice, which is the logical *prius* of love's work in salvation, but it is incumbent upon him to show that such is the case.

The second group of passages to be considered is found in connection with the discourse on the bread of life, especially the words: "The bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world"; "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves"; "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in him" (Jn. vi. 51, 53, 56). The common view is that we have here references to Jesus' submission to death for the salvation of the world, that is, to his making an atonement by his death for human sins. Some see in the words allusions to the Lord's Supper, in which, however, the expiatory idea is involved. The verses quoted, if taken by themselves, do most naturally carry one's thoughts in this direction, and the corresponding interpretation is certainly plausible. When the discourse is regarded as a whole, however, this explanation does not seem to me so natural. The course of events (beginning with *v.* 1) which lead up to the discourse does not favor either the sacramental or the sacrificial interpretation. Jesus is illustrating his present life-giving work in healing and in quickening the spiritually dead. The miracle of the loaves is set in the same connection of ideas. This outward act of feeding suggests the motive of the description of himself as the bearer of spiritual food to mankind, which is elaborated under the figure of the bread of life. Moreover, he is represented as addressing in this discourse his enemies and critics. Is it natural to suppose that in such circumstances he would introduce a description of his future sacrificial death or a reference to a Christian memorial sacrament to be established later? Such a supposition seems to me in the highest degree unnatural. It should be added that, in keeping with the descriptions which lead up to the discourse, the language refers chiefly to a present bestowment of life, "My Father is (now) giving you (δίδωσιν) the true bread out of heaven" (Jn. vi. 32). Jesus was speaking of a salvation which he was offering to men then and there — a present, available bread of life. It is true that in verse 51 we have the future tense, "The bread which I will give (δώσω) is my flesh." In order to obtain the sacrificial interpretation of these words, two assumptions have to be made: (1) that the verb διδόναι here means to give to God as an offering, and (2) that by the future tense a definite future event (Christ's death) must be meant. Both assumptions are questionable. The verb διδόναι is used throughout (*vv.* 31–34) of giving food for man's nourishment, and the future tense may quite naturally denote Christ's continuous giving of himself for the life of the world. "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him," says Jesus.

It seems to me that the discourse is designed and adapted to convey, in figurative terms, the idea of a spiritual appropriation of Christ. This is the conception of its import which suits the circumstances which lead up to it and agrees with the natural meaning of the phrase, to eat the bread of life. Moreover, Dr. John Lightfoot has given abundant examples of the use of this figure in the Jewish schools. In the light of this usage his conclusion as to the meaning of the discourse under consideration is this, "To partake of the Messiah truly is to partake of himself, his pure nature, his righteousness, his spirit; and to live and grow and receive nourishment from that participation of him — things which the Jewish schools heard little of, did not believe, did not think; but things which our blessed Saviour expresseth lively and comprehensively enough, by that of eating his flesh and drinking his blood."[1] It is indeed possible, as Weiss suggests, that in reproducing the discourse, tradition assigned to some of its terms a sacrificial meaning or viewed its language as specially applicable to the eucharist. If so, it can only be said that this application does not seem warranted by the circumstances, the occasion, or the language of the teaching taken as a whole. The dominant idea is that of ethical appropriation. I think that all its expressions are compatible with this idea. But if it be insisted that the references to eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man must refer either to Christ's death or to the eucharist, the most natural conclusion from that assumption would be that this is an application which was given to the discourse in the composition or redaction of the narrative. Neither the situation presupposed, nor the figure used, nor the obviously mystical language which is prevailingly employed, lends itself naturally to either of the more common interpretations.

We turn next to those passages which speak of our Lord's giving his life or consecrating himself on behalf of (*ὑπέρ*) others. As the Good Shepherd he "lays down his life for the sheep" (Jn. x. 11, 15). The selfish proposal of Caiaphas to sacrifice Jesus in order to avert suspicion from the ruling classes is viewed by our author as an unconscious prophecy of the necessity of Christ's death. Unwittingly "he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation; and not for the nation only, but that he might also gather together into one the children of God that are scattered abroad" (Jn. xi. 51, 52). In his great love he "lays down his life for his friends" (Jn. xv. 13). For his disciples' sakes he "sanctifies or devotes himself that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth" (Jn. xvii. 19). To these passages which express the idea of the gift of himself on behalf of others may be added the striking figurative generalization of this truth, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit" (Jn. xii. 24).

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[1] *Horæ Hebraicæ*, *in loco*, Oxford ed., III. 309. This general conception of the purpose of the discourse is entertained, with variations in the applications of its meaning, by Westcott, Weiss, and Wendt.

Now the special points of interest for our present inquiry are: What is the import of the phrase, "to lay down his life for" others (τιθέναι τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπέρ)?[1] What is the meaning of his "sanctification" (ἁγιάζειν) of himself for (ὑπέρ) his disciples that they may be sanctified? Do these representations, taken together, point in the direction of a substitutionary death, having judicial or penal significance, or do they rather favor the idea of an absolute consecration of his life to the service of others which stopped short of no consequence to which it might lead? Some interpreters find the expiatory idea in the phrase, "to lay down his life for" others. It is held to mean, to pay down his life as a ransom-price for the redemption of others. It is noticeable, however, that the support for this interpretation is drawn from the classical use of the phrase or from biblical sources outside the Johannine writings, such as: "Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom (ὁ δοὺς ἑαυτὸν ἀντίλυτρον) for all" in 1 Tim. ii. 6, and the Synoptic phrase "to give his life a ransom for many" (δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν) (Mk. x. 45 = Mt. xx. 28), which is assumed to bear a judicial sense. But this method of determining the force of the phrase is certainly questionable. We cannot properly assume that because a similar expression in 1 Tim. carries a certain meaning, therefore that meaning attaches to this Johannine phrase. In point of fact this phrase is an idiom of the Johannine writings, and is to be explained from their characteristic use of words. As τιθέναι τὰ ἱμάτια is the correlative of λαμβάνειν τὰ ἱμάτια (Jn. xiii. 4, 12), so is τιθέναι τὴν ψυχήν the correlative of λαμβάνειν τὴν ψυχήν (Jn. x. 17, 18). His giving of his life is the counterpart of his taking or receiving it again, as in the Synoptics: He that giveth, or loseth, his life shall save it. The following are the other principal examples of its use: "Peter says, I will lay down my life for thee" (Jn. xiii. 37, 38);

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[1] *Cf.* the kindred idea of his giving his flesh for the life of the world — διδόναι τὴν σάρκα αὐτοῦ ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς. — Jn. vi. 51.

"Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (I. iii. 16). In the frequent instances where *τιθέναι* is not followed by *τὴν ψυχήν*, but by other objects, the meaning is generally "to lay away, or aside," for example: "Where have ye laid him?" "He layeth aside his garments."[1] Now, these Johannine uses of the word *τιθέναι* do not favor the idea that in the passages under consideration its meaning is, to pay down as a ransom. There certainly could have been no such thought in Peter's mind, or in the minds of those who heard him, when he said, "I will lay down my life for Jesus' sake." Nor is it conceivable that the author could have had such an idea when he compared the giving of life by Christians for each other to Christ's giving of his life for them. It would be unnatural in the last degree to attach a wholly different meaning to the same words in the two clauses of the same sentence. Jesus' laying down of his life for men must have been, for our author, of such a nature that men could, in some degree, imitate and copy it. He could not have conceived of it as generically different from the self-giving of Christians in mutual love and service. For these reasons most modern scholars reject the traditional rendering "to pay as a ransom" in favor of the meaning, "to yield, give, or bestow."

We consider next the meaning of the words: "For their sakes I sanctify myself," etc. (*ἁγιάζω ἐμαυτόν*) (Jn. xvii. 19). Its general import cannot be doubtful. As the Father sanctified him and sent him into the world (Jn. x. 36), that is, consecrated him to his saving office and mission, so also he freely consecrates himself to this work with all that it involves. But do the words include a direct and intended reference to his death, and, if so, do they intimate or suggest anything respecting the saving import of that death? The traditional interpretation answers both these questions in the affirmative. In this view, the meaning is, I consecrate myself in death as an expiatory sacrifice unto God. This explanation is fortified by reference to a sacrificial use of ἁγιάζειν, which is found in the Septuagint.[1] Now we cannot doubt that Jesus' consecration of himself to his saving work included his devotion of himself to whatever experiences and sufferings might lie in his path. At the time which this discourse contemplates he saw the cross impending over him so that his self-consecration doubtless involved for his consciousness the experience of death. But it does not follow from this that these words have direct and specific reference to the experience of dying, much less that they denote his death as an expiation or a judicial equivalent for sin's penalty. In no other instance does the Johannine use of ἁγιάζειν convey or suggest this interpretation. The Father's sanctification of Jesus in x. 36 is his consecration of him to his messianic office. The sanctification of the disciples for which Jesus prays, and which his saving work contemplates, is sanctification "in the truth" (xvii. 17, 19), that is, consecration to God and to holiness of life. The common interpretation requires us to assume a double sense for the word "sanctify" in verse 19 — a supposition against which there is, to say the least, an antecedent presumption. This difficulty has sometimes been met by rendering, I consecrate myself to death in sacrifice in order that my disciples may consecrate themselves to death as martyrs for my cause. But apart from its unnaturalness and the large element of importation in this interpretation, a single self-consistent meaning for ἁγιάζειν is not thereby secured, since there is a wide difference between dying as a substitute and dying as a martyr. Moreover, in the whole discourse there is no allusion to his death, much less to an expiatory interpretation of it, unless it is contained in this one use of ἁγιάζω. There are, however, several expressions of what he has done, is doing, and will do in his saving work. They are these: His gift to men of eternal life through the knowledge of God and of himself (*vv.* 2, 3); his accomplishment of the Father's will in manifesting his name and glorifying him on the earth (*vv.* 4, 6); his conveyance of God's truth to men (*vv.* 8, 14); his guarding of his own from error and sin (*v.* 12); his prayer that the Father will keep them, bind them to himself and to one another in love, and complete in them the work which he has begun (*vv.* 17, 21–26).

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[1] Jn. xi. 34; xiii. 4, *cf.* xix. 41; xx. 2, 13, 15.

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[1] *E.g.* Ex. xiii. 2; Deut. xv. 19.

It is in the midst of this course of thought that our passage stands. Jesus is saying that as the Father sent him into the world, so he is sending them, and that as he is consecrating himself for their good, so they are to be consecrated to God. Have we not a close parallel here, alike in form and substance, to this, "Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (I. iii. 16)? It seems to me that this Johannine parallel, the context of our passage, and the use of ἁγιάζειν by our author all favor the opinion that we have here "two consecrations of a homogeneous character" (Godet). The conclusion of Holtzmann that here, as in i. 29, the Pauline expiatory theory lies in the background[1] seems to me without proof or evidence. Nor is the argument to the effect that the present tense (ἁγιάζω) excludes the idea that he refers to his consecration of his life in general,[2] a cogent one. The tense is perfectly appropriate to express the idea of a continuous and not yet completed self-giving. We are told that his life was past, and that in speaking in the present tense he could not refer to that;[3] but it is quite certain that at the moment of speaking he was not dying. The general contention that the author of the Fourth Gospel has no idea of the divine love except as illustrated in propitiation, and that his language must therefore relate to the satisfaction of the divine wrath "whether he has given articulate expression to such a relation or not,"[4] assumes the whole case which requires to be proved. For the reasons given I can only conclude that the phrase in question most naturally refers to our Lord's consecration of himself to his appointed work, which would include whatever that work might involve. In point of fact it included, and he foresaw that it included, his death. But of any special interpretation of his death I can find in the passage in question no trace.

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[1] *Hand-Commentar, in loco.*

[2] Holtzmann, *Neutest. Theol.* II. 479; Denney, *The Death of Christ*, p. 269.

[3] So Denney, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 268, 276.

The principle of self-giving is stated in a general form in the saying, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit" (Jn. xii. 24). Here, it is said, Jesus is speaking specifically of his own death, and makes the power of his work directly dependent upon it; as the grain of wheat must die in order to bear fruit, so must he. Even assuming that this is exactly the sense which the words are meant to convey, I find no intimation here of the way in which his death yields the fruitage of salvation. If it is legitimate to introduce the Pauline idea of propitiation, or to suppose that it lies in the background of our author's version of the Lord's words, then, of course, the meaning is plain enough: Christ must by his death atone for sin before its forgiveness can take place. But in order to find all this in such a saying, it should be shown, I think, that these ideas are plainly expressed or implied in the language elsewhere attributed to Jesus by the author, or, at any rate, that they hold an unquestionable place in his own thought. Now it is not open to doubt that Jesus knew himself to be facing the near prospect of death, and that his devotion of himself to his life-work included his submission to that experience. In the sense that his own life was included in the law which he here states, we may hold that he refers to his death. But I see no evidence that the reference is more specific. The verse in question seems to be paralleled by the verses which immediately follow and to be explained by them. The discourse continues: "He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me," etc. (Jn. xii. 25, 26). Now these immediately following, and apparently kindred, words are simply the reproduction of the frequent Synoptic saying, "He that loseth his life shall save it." Does any one suppose that saying to refer specifically to Jesus' death and even to its propitiatory character? It is true that later on in the discourse (*v.* 27 *sq.*) the thought turns directly to the subject of his death. If the popular view of the strict unity and coherence of these Johannine discourses be assumed, it may be urged that the thoughts which come after must have been in mind throughout. If, then, we make every assumption which it seems possible to make, we may find in this saying an expression of the fact that the law of self-giving would involve his death, and that great saving benefits would result from his submission of himself to that law. The claim that it is the death *per se* which is conceived as the source of the benefits seems excessive. It is not the death of the wheat which produces the harvest; the death or perishing of the grain sown is a step in the process of nature whereby the germs of the seed are liberated that they may develop into the new product. What the analogy yields is naturally this, that Jesus' death is a necessary condition of his greatest work and power; that through death his work for men is made to end in larger life and greater fruitfulness.

No candid student of the New Testament could wish to minimize any evidence which can be found that Jesus taught or suggested some specific view of the way in which his death procured or conditioned salvation. No one who has any historical interest or insight would fail to appreciate every item of information which might serve to show that Jesus had offered to his disciples a theory or philosophy of the relation of his death to the forgiveness of sins. It is one of the great embarrassments of New Testament study that so little information of this kind can be found. It is natural enough that Christian theologians should make the most of every phrase and word which can be so construed as to contribute to a theoretic or constructive view of that subject. But our great desire for evidence does not warrant us in manufacturing it. Paul wrought out a definite theory on the subject, and the orthodoxy of all ages has been a reproduction, with variations, of that theory. But, as we have seen, if it is to be found in the Synoptics, it must be discovered in one or two phrases. It does not appear in the reports of the first apostolic preaching. We find something kindred to it in Hebrews — but with a wide difference. We look with eager interest to see whether we may find it, or some approximation to it, in the Fourth Gospel, which is later than all the other sources and is preëminently dominated by a theological interest. Some are able to find a full theory of expiation there; I am not, — least of all in the sayings about his death ascribed to Jesus. The saying attributed to John the Baptist is the one which most naturally lends itself to the expiatory interpretation. But even if this last of the Old Testament prophets had anticipated the whole Pauline and ecclesiastical theology, we should be, for all that, as far off as ever from knowing the relation in which Jesus conceived his death to stand to the forgiveness of sins.

Let us next note the references to the subject in the First Epistle. Here the principal relevant passages are: "The blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I. i. 7); "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation (*ἱλασμός*) for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (I. ii. 1, 2); "God loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (I. iv. 10). To these may be added the saying already noticed, that "he was manifested to take away sins" (I. iii. 5), and this, "Your sins are forgiven for his name's sake" (I. ii. 12). Now whatever the first of these passages may presuppose, it is quite clear that it describes not a bearing of sin or a judicial cancelling of guilt, but an actual deliverance from sin itself. In this respect it resembles most closely not those Pauline passages which speak of Christ's being made "sin" and "a curse" for us, but the references which we found so common in Hebrews, to Christ's cleansing the inner life by his blood,[1] perfecting the conscience, and putting away sins by the sacrifice of himself (Heb. ix. 9, 26; x. 10, 14). The reference to Christ as an "Advocate with the Father" also reminds us of the doctrine of his eternal priesthood in Hebrews. That an actual purification, and not merely a provision for a possible forgiveness, is meant in I. i. 7 is further evident from the fact that it is a "cleansing" of believers of which the author is speaking. This cleansing is dependent upon their fulfilling certain conditions described by "walking in the light." If the Christian readers do thus "walk in the light," two results will follow: they will have fellowship with one another, and will be cleansed by the blood of Jesus from all sin.

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[1] Heb. ix. 14, x. 2, *καθαρίζειν* in both instances.

As has been intimated, it is commonly contended that behind this passage, and, indeed, behind all the passages which we have been reviewing, there lies the assumption of a judicial satisfaction for sin which is viewed as the condition precedent of all the actual effects which are ascribed to the death or blood of Christ. As we have seen, this contention rests rather upon inference than upon any indication contained in the passages themselves, or their context. This inference is held, however, to receive strong confirmation from the two passages in this Epistle, in which Christ is expressly called a propitiation, that is, according to a Johannine idiom, a cause or means of propitiation. This term (*ἱλασμός*), it is held, links the Johannine thought to that of Paul, by whom Christ is described as a propitiation (*ἱλαστήριον*) in the shedding of his blood (Rom. iii. 25). We have seen that it is by no means easy to determine with certainty the exact meaning of *ἱλαστήριον* in Paul; still, the context, in connection with other analogous references, seems to me to make the import of it fairly definite and plain. Can the same be said of *ἱλασμός* in 1 John? And does it follow from the occasional use of these kindred words by the two writers that the later shared the thought-world of the earlier? In any case, we shall have to look first at the context of the Johannine passages.

Deissmann has shown[1] in what a variety of meanings and applications the word ἱλασμός and its congeners is used in biblical and patristic Greek. The New Testament usage is, as we have seen, very limited. We have ἱλαστήριον once in Paul so correlated with ἔνδειξις τῆς δικαιοσύνης θεοῦ as to show that it bears a significance approximating the classical meaning. In Hebrews the same word means the lid of the ark and ἱλάσκεσθαι is loosely used in the sense of expiating, having not a person for its object, either expressed or implied, but τὰς ἁμαρτίας. This is the whole body of New Testament usage outside our passages. We naturally ask: Does ἱλασμός here bear any specific relation to the righteousness of God or the satisfaction of the divine law? Does it refer to a legal expiation of guilt, or does it relate rather to a moral cleansing, a power of purification? The arguments for the former view would be drawn from the original force of the word and from the analogy of Paul's usage. We are further reminded of the stress which the author lays upon the saving significance of the death of Christ: "His blood cleanseth"; "He laid down his life for us." Such expressions, it is urged, naturally warrant us in centring the idea of propitiation upon the death and in saying, His death *is* the propitiation. It is contended, *per contra*, that the word in question has, in any case, lost its original force. It is not even used by Paul in its strict sense of rendering favorable. In Hebrews it is even further from this meaning. It is claimed (so Deissmann) that, in actual usage, it is applied to any votive or sacrificial gift. We are further reminded that, in this Epistle, the author does not deduce the idea of "propitiation" from the righteousness or wrath of God or from the demands of the law, but from the divine love, "Herein is love that God sent his Son to be an ἱλασμός for our sins." Furthermore, this Epistle says nothing, in general, of a juridical cancellation of guilt, but speaks rather of a cancellation of sin itself, an actual deliverance from sin's power. In this view, Christ is held to be a "propitiation" in the sense that his blood really "cleanses from all sin." Not acquittal on the basis of a formal satisfaction, but purification by virtue of an actual renewing power is here the keynote. Moreover, it is *not* said that the death of Christ, or the blood of Christ specifically, *is* the "propitiation," but that Christ himself is such. It is Christ in the entirety of his personality and power who "was manifested to take away sins," really to undo the work of Satan (I. iii. 8) and to establish men in a character resembling the divine love and purity.[1]

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[1] *Zeitschr. für neutestamentl. Wissenschaft*, Heft 3.

Such, in brief, are the arguments on either side. The considerations which, more and more, seem to me to be decisive for the second general view are those which are drawn from the determining conceptions of the writings under consideration, namely, the emphasis on the person as the bearer of light and salvation, the definition of salvation in terms of actual cleansing, and the correlation of the death of Christ with the undoing of sin rather than with the cancellation of guilt or the satisfaction of law. While the word *ἱλασμός* would naturally incline us to expect a doctrine of expiation in these writings, it must be said, I think, that the direct evidence of its presence is wanting. It is incumbent on those who insist that it is presupposed and implied to show that it is part of the warp and woof of the author's thought; it is not enough to point out that he has some words and phrases in common with Paul, and to assume without more ado that the theology of Paul is logically involved even if none of its fundamental conceptions come to expression. What the author had in the background of his mind I leave it for others to divine and elucidate; I can find in his writings no doctrine of a substitutionary satisfaction to the law or the wrath of God whereby the guilt of sin is cancelled. With even less plausibility than in the case of the Synoptics is it claimed that the Johannine tradition attributes this expiatory view of his death to Jesus himself.

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[1] *Cf.* Beyschlag, *N. T. Theol.* II. 445–450; Terry, *The Mediation of Christ*, pp. 85–87.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

If now we glance backward over the investigations which we have pursued, the fact which most forcibly strikes our attention is that the biblical doctrine respecting the nature of salvation stands forth in clear, strong relief. Salvation is recovery from sin to holiness; it is the life of obedience, love, and service to God; it is sonship to God and fellowship with him; in the last analysis, it is God-likeness. In this conception all the voices of revelation meet and blend. True, the conception comes only gradually to its full development and expression. In the prophets it is complicated with the hope of a national deliverance; in the legal system it is accompanied and limited by notions of ceremonial purification. Still, even in Old Testament times this idea of salvation as a right personal relation to God maintained and asserted itself. Yahweh demanded and would at length secure to himself a righteous people. This was the burden of the Baptist's message: Repent and forsake your sins; One is at hand who will baptize you with the cleansing Spirit of God. But it was Jesus who set this doctrine of salvation in the clearest light and showed the way to its realization. Not alone in precept and in parable, but in his own character and action did he show men what the life of sonship to God is. The perfect filial consciousness of Jesus is the unclouded mirror in which men see themselves as they truly are — alike in their actual sinfulness and in their moral possibilities. He represented himself as the way to the Father — his person and work as the pattern and power of a new life.

After his departure from earth religious thought and feeling seized upon this conception of his personal agency in salvation and elaborated it in various ways. The problem was to see and to show how his work had availed and was still availing to bring men to God in love and trust. Above all, the question for that time was how his sufferings and death, which had been so contrary to the expectations of his contemporaries, could serve this end. The point of importance to be observed here is that, whatever differences the answers given to this question might exhibit, all the various types of teaching which are reflected in the New Testament substantially agreed as to what salvation is. There might be different modes of apprehending the relation to it of Christ's death. There might be a variety of analogies and illustrations used to set forth its significance. But beneath these differences lay one fundamental conception of God, of man, and of Christ's mediation which was common to all. Hence we find that interpreters are substantially agreed as to what was the primitive Christian conception of salvation ; the chief differences arise when the effort is made to determine the views which were taken of the method of God in effecting it — more specifically how the sufferings and death of Christ stood related to it.

It should be understood, then, that the differences among theological interpreters and thinkers do not concern so much the nature of salvation as the method or conditions on which it is provided and offered. Different expositors have derived different results from the New Testament in regard to this latter subject, and, not infrequently, have pushed their divergences so far as to involve themselves in widely separated views regarding the ethical nature of God. Why, it may be asked, have candid and conscientious interpreters gone so far asunder ? Partly, no doubt, because of the different presuppositions which they have brought to their study, and partly because the subject *is* variously represented and illustrated in the New Testament, and every interpreter may find something there to encourage his own favorite mode of thought. The mind which thinks in terms of animal sacrifice will find a congenial representation in Hebrews. The thinker of the Roman, legal cast will hear his favorite keynote in Paul's idea of a satisfaction to law, meeting the ends of penalty, while the mystic will find ample material in the same apostle's conception of ethical death to sin on Christ's cross and in John's doctrine of a "propitiation" which is a moral cleansing provided and wrought by the divine love. When, now, one has taken in hand the general subject from any one of these points of view, it is natural enough for him to find in all the more indefinite texts the ideas which are elsewhere made so emphatic. In this way, especially, the allusions of Jesus to his death are made to yield whatever an assumed identity with some later form of thought requires, and in the same way the general references of the primitive apostolic discourses are easily rendered more precise. We shall see later how the differing presuppositions and procedures to which we here allude have been pushed so far as to involve fundamental divergences of view respecting the ethical nature of God. But even these divergences have not involved correspondingly radical differences regarding the *nature of salvation.* At any rate, I repeat that while there is a variety of modes of thought represented in the New Testament regarding what is called the problem of atonement, these differences do not involve any radical divergence as to the ethical character of God or the contents of the idea of salvation. And I would add that although the differences among the theories which have since prevailed are much greater than those which appear in the New Testament, it would be feasible to show that underneath these disputes about reconciliation, satisfaction, and the like, there is a fairly well defined conception of *salvation itself* concerning which Christian thinkers are substantially agreed.

Let us glance back over the subjects which we have discussed and seek to estimate the general results and to see in what light they place our subsequent tasks. As was intimated at the outset, we cannot obtain material directly available for Christian doctrine from the Old Testament, though we may derive from that source presumptions as to what early Christian doctrine probably was. Our brief survey of that field showed us two great religious forces in operation, — prophetism and legalism. The whole effect of modern criticism has been to demonstrate the priority of the former. The fully developed legal system as it lies before us in the Pentateuch is post-exilic. It is prophecy and not legalism which represents the high-water mark of Israel's religious life. While the law in its ceremonial aspects was influential and useful in safeguarding the religious and institutional life of the nation, it cannot be forgotten that it was the decline of prophecy and the ascendency of ritualism which brought on the night of legalism in the late Jewish period, and produced the scribism and Pharisaism with which we are made familiar in the New Testament. The superior character and deeper significance which the modern construction of Israel's history assigns to prophecy are entirely accordant with the attitude and claims of Jesus. He belongs to the prophetic rather than to the priestly order. He never assumed priestly functions or emphasized the importance of priestly ministrations. All his explanations of his mission wore a prophetic cast. He came to declare and illustrate the divine will, to reveal the Father, to bear witness to the truth.

We are not precluded, however, by such considerations from seeking in the ceremonial system adumbrations of his truth and points of contact with his mission. In the sacrifices there was a periodic "remembrance made of sins" which was accordant with Jesus' saving purpose. His whole work in its total effect was designed to deepen the sense of sin. There could be no salvation where sin was not seen and felt in its real heinousness and blameworthiness. Whatever the offerings might do to quicken the realization of sin was kindred to the aim of Jesus. Such conceptions as those of devotion to God, mystic communion with him, and self-renunciation for his sake, which were more or less distinctly associated with the offering of sacrifices, were germane to the thought and work of Jesus. The notion of the sacrifice as an atonement or covering for the sins of the offerer supplied an analogue to the work of Jesus in doing for men what they could not do for themselves. His mediation of the grace of God to them might very naturally be illustrated by the function of the offering as a form of mediation between God and the sinner. The question of principal difficulty is whether Jesus, and following him the early Church, entertained a substitutionary and penal conception of the sacrifices, and attributed to his death a similar character and significance. Here I can only remind the reader how precarious we found the argument for the penal conception of sacrifice — a fact which, to say the least, is adapted to weaken the common assumption that such an interpretation would be natural, if not inevitable, for Jesus.

When, now, we turn to the twofold tradition of Jesus' own words, — the Synoptic and the Johannine, — we find the main stress of his teaching concerning salvation laid upon certain ethical conditions which men must fulfil. If they would enter into the Kingdom of God, they must cultivate and maintain, not a ceremonial, but a real moral righteousness. They must love and serve their fellowmen ; they must exercise a pity, a sympathy, a generosity like that of God himself. In the Johannine version his teaching wears a more mystical cast. Men must learn to know God and must live in fellowship with him ; they must belong to the truth, must live as children of the light and of the day, must dwell in God and God in them. But this difference is only formal. In both cases salvation is realized in sonship to God, and Jesus is at once the interpreter of the Father to men and the revealer of man's possible sonship to him. He is himself the Son of God *par éminence ;* he lived the perfectly filial life ; he knows God as his own Father with a clear, unclouded certainty, and his aim is to introduce men into the same relation of sonship. Hence his message to men is : You must be and may be true sons of God ; I who alone know the Father am come to reveal him to you ; in me you behold him disclosed and interpreted ; receive and follow me, and you shall have the rights and privileges of sons of God.

I do not see how any one can doubt that this message is the burden of Jesus' doctrine of salvation. And yet, we are told that his chief object in coming into the world was not to proclaim the gospel of salvation but by dying as a sacrifice for sin, to found the possibility of a gospel which others might preach.[1] On this view what are we to make of the fact that Jesus came heralding the good news of the Kingdom of God? What means it that he proclaimed the Kingdom as a present reality and bade men enter into it? How shall we explain the fact that he everywhere announced himself as the Saviour of the men to whom he spoke, the bread of life which God was giving to mankind? On this view there is no gospel in Jesus' teaching. His ministry is but a prelude to his death by which alone a gospel becomes possible. The message of forgiveness is not yet provided for, although we hear Jesus himself saying to men: "Thy sins are forgiven"; "thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." How completely are the proportions of his teaching distorted by such a view! How obvious it is that we have here a dogmatic transformation of the gospel history!

Jesus did, indeed, — probably late in his ministry, — speak of the necessity that his career should end in suffering and death. But this experience he correlated with his life of service and self-giving, of which he regarded these as a part. He came to minister and to give his life; out of love he would lay down his life for his friends; he would plant his life, as it were, in the soil of the world that it might bring forth in others the fruits of love and service. Is this giving of life which springs from love's impulse to serve and bless the mere isolated act of dying? And did Jesus conceive this act of dying as a payment of a debt to the divine justice whereby was laid the ground of a possible forgiveness? If so, how did it happen that he was always proclaiming the divine forgiveness? What is the reason, then, that he never spoke of his death in connection with the divine law or justice or wrath, or applied to it any such term as atonement, reconciliation, satisfaction, or substitution? Why did he not describe himself as a sin offering and his blood as a covering for the guilt of men before God on the analogy of the piacular sacrifices? But here again we are told that this whole scheme of thought is, nevertheless, logically involved and even comes to occasional expression, and we are reminded of the phrases (in the Synoptic tradition) "ransom for many," and "my blood shed for the remission of sins," and of our Lord's comparison of his blood to that of the covenant sacrifice. Now, the argument continues, since these phrases evidently bear a sacrificial and substitutionary significance, it is further evident that the same is true of such Johannine expressions as "drawing all men to himself from his cross" and "giving men his flesh to eat and his blood to drink" — all the more obviously because John the Baptist heralded him in advance as the (sacrificial) Lamb of God, and the author, in his First Epistle, applies to him the term "propitiation." I will not repeat what has been said in earlier chapters in reviewing these various considerations. One hesitates to question the cogency of the argument since it seems to satisfy so many thoughtful and candid minds. But I must confess that to me it appears to be composed chiefly of a tissue of questionable assumptions. The application made of every one of the phrases in question is doubtful. The ransom-passage is a figure of speech occurring only once. It is not claimed that the idea which is deduced from it appears elsewhere in the Synoptics. Moreover, the context lends no support to the current theological interpretation, but indicates, on the contrary, that by the giving of his life of which he spoke, Jesus designated the culmination of his career of service. The juridical interpretation of the isolated phrase, "for the forgiveness of sins," found only in Matthew, is more plausible and is not improbably, though not certainly, correct. We have seen what difficulties attend the supposition of its originality. But such as it is, the evidence drawn from this phrase is all the proof which can be derived from the Synoptics to the effect that Jesus regarded his death as laying a basis for forgiveness. The reader will make his own estimate of its sufficiency.

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[1] Dale, *The Atonement*, p. 46.

The case is no stronger in regard to the Fourth Gospel, despite the fact that it is a relatively late composition dominated by a theological interest and supposed to be tinged by Pauline influences. Here Jesus' references to his death are more numerous and detailed, but there is not one of them that bears a sacrificial character, to say nothing of suggesting a penal satisfaction. He gives his flesh and blood, that is, himself, for the life of the world; as the Good Shepherd, he lays down his life in his devotion to the welfare of his sheep; he consecrates himself to his mission that men may be consecrated to God in truth; in his love he gives his life for his friends; from his cross he will draw men to himself. The arguments advanced to prove that these sayings bear a penal or judicial sense are, to my mind, of very doubtful validity. They are derived from the exclamation attributed to the Baptist, from analogous references to the slain Lamb in the Apocalypse, and from the word "propitiation." Those who are convinced by this sort of proof seem to me to be easily satisfied, and, perhaps, predisposed to be so. When one considers that the phrase "Lamb of God" (whatever usage it actually reflects) is probably a reminiscence of Is. liii, — a passage in which the primitive Christian teachers saw the Messiah reflected without finding a suggestion of penal substitution in it, — and observes the connection of ideas in which the Johannine term "propitiation" is set, the argument in question is seen to rest on the most precarious assumptions. Considerations drawn from the Apocalypse are relevant only on the supposition that it proceeds from the author of the Fourth Gospel, and that its conceptions are available for determining the import of words ascribed to Jesus.

It is true enough that the death of Christ furnished a problem with which reflective thought was certain to occupy itself. We have examples of such theoretic constructions in the Pauline Epistles and in the Epistle to the Hebrews. It may be regarded as surprising that the Fourth Gospel furnishes so few indications of any theoretic view of the subject. One reason may be found in the spiritual and intuitional character of the book and in its preoccupation with other interests. Perhaps no developed theory was current in the author's circle. At any rate, he has ascribed to Jesus no teaching regarding his death as procuring or conditioning the forgiveness of sins, nor do his own ideas of the nature of Christ's saving work make it likely that he cherished any such conception. In no case is Christ's work brought into connection with the law or with God's penal righteousness or wrath. Sin is a state of darkness and moral death; Christ is the bearer to the world of life and light.

The traditional view commonly supports itself upon two considerations which it is not easy to harmonize. The few words contained in the Gospels which can be made to bear an expiatory significance are pressed to the utmost limit in this direction, and then as if quite conscious of the real lack of evidence, the theory argues that this is a theme which we could not expect our Lord to elaborate. The second consideration, which greatly weakens if it does not entirely neutralize the first, is the more cogent. Jesus was not a teacher of theological theory. To suppose that he meant to set before us such a representation of his death in its relation to the divine attributes and to moral government as we find in Paul, is completely to disregard the method of Jesus in the interest of dogmatic opinion. But strong as the presumption is against such a view, the facts of the case are stronger still, and there could be no better proof of this than that which is furnished by the circumstance that after the current exegesis has professed to find the doctrine of substitution and satisfaction in *λύτρον* and *εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*, its representatives virtually surrender the case by the admission that these ideas could only be developed after Jesus' death by reflection upon its significance.

We turn next to the Pauline Epistles, and the first relevant fact which we meet is that the apostle had received through the primitive Christian tradition from the Lord himself the truth that Jesus died for (*ὑπέρ*) our sins in fulfilment of Scripture (1 Cor. xv. 3). This tradition is the earliest testimony concerning the relation between the death of Christ and salvation from sin which we possess. It is common to assume that Paul means to tell us here that his own doctrine of atonement and of forgiveness as conditioned by it, was contained in the primitive Christian teaching, and even in that of Jesus himself. But this the apostle does not say, and there is no sufficient evidence that such was the fact. In order to prove it we should need to find this view presented in such fragments of the teaching of the first Christians as we possess, and sustained by the words of Jesus himself. The only claim which can be made in favor of the first point must be derived from 1 Peter. The early discourses in Acts contain no suggestion of the Pauline idea of a substitutionary expiation. Christ's death is depicted in terms drawn from the description of the suffering Servant. It is never even described in terms of sacrifice. 1 Peter advances beyond this point of view and makes use of sacrificial analogies (1 Pet. i. 11, 18, 19 ; iii. 18), though the death is correlated, as in Hebrews, with moral cleansing rather than, as in Paul, with a legal acquittal from guilt. The point already mentioned, that this Epistle — by whomsoever written — seems to show many marks of dependence upon Paul, is relevant here, though it is one which, of course, can only be decided in the forum of criticism. The maintenance of the second point, that the expiatory idea was a part of Jesus' own teaching, would depend on the success of the interpretations which discover this conception in the passages from the Gospels already reviewed. The argument may be summarized thus : Paul says that the primitive Church, and, indeed, Jesus himself, taught that he died to save men from sin, and we find Jesus saying (in the Matthew-passage) that his blood was shed "for the forgiveness of sins." Now from Paul we know in what sense he died "for sins" or for their forgiveness, that is, to make a satisfaction to God's justice which might open the way to their pardon ; therefore the first Christians and Jesus himself must have taught this, and we find such to be the case, since Jesus said that he gave his life as a ransom-price, that is (see the Septuagint), as an atoning sacrifice.

One sees what are the materials of which this structure is built: the substitutionary character of sacrifice; λύτρον as denoting such a sacrifice; the phrase "for the forgiveness of sins" not only original but requiring to be juridically interpreted. Who could fail to observe the circular character of the argument? The words of Jesus are read in the light of Pauline ideas, and then the Pauline ideas are found to be confirmed and illustrated by the words of Jesus, the whole procedure being dominated by a fixed adherence to traditional dogma and by the assumption that this dogma will be found wherever the New Testament is opened. This mode of argument seems to me to render all historical understanding of the development of the doctrine of Christ's death in the early Church absolutely impossible.

But, in any case, we have in Paul the outlines of a fairly definite theory. It is the theory of a substitutionary expiation. There are adumbrations of it elsewhere in the New Testament, and it is possible, but not, to my mind, certain, that it was in some measure shared by the authors of 1 Peter, Hebrews, and the Johannine writings. But however this may be, it is formulated by no other New Testament writer, and I question whether it would ever have been derived from them if we had not possessed an elaboration of it in the Pauline Epistles. The traditional doctrines of atonement are reproductions of Paulinism, with variations and additions. Now the questions of special interest here are: (1) What is the relation of this theory to the current Jewish ideas of the vicarious sufferings of the righteous? (2) What is its relation to other elements of Paul's thought — such as his mysticism and his doctrine of God? and finally, (3) What is its availability, or in what form is it available, for the thought of to-day?

The first of these questions is sure to receive more attention than heretofore from students who approach theological questions in a historic method and spirit. From such study as I have been able to devote to the subject it seems to me clear that this late Jewish doctrine is the obvious source of Paul's theory of substitution. But it must have undergone a partial transformation at his hands. Speaking of the passages from 4 Maccabees which illustrate this idea (*cf.* p. 59), Deissmann says that the conception which they embody "did not arise as a hard, dogmatic theorem, but is decisively determined by the mysterious and keen intuition of religious pathos."[1] The same undoubtedly holds true of the classic expression of the idea which we have in Isa. lii. 13–liii. 12, according to its original spirit and design. Its belongs to the prophetic, rather than to the priestly, order of ideas. The vicariousness which it represents is not the vicariousness of literal substitution and legal transfer, but the vicariousness of real experience in which the faithful and righteous bear on their hearts the woes and burdens entailed by the careless and the sinful.

We cannot pursue this subject further at present, but, before leaving it, let me commend to the reader the following suggestive passage from Dr. George Adam Smith regarding these two standpoints and the relation of each to Christian theology: "Unfortunately, both in Jewish and in Christian theology, it has been the sacrificial animals and not the human Servant, Law and not Prophecy, which have governed the conceptions of atonement for sin. Symbol and ritual were among ancient people the best vehicle for the tradition of ideas, and therefore we can understand why, till our Lord's time, the truths we are treating should find their favorite popular expression in the forms of animal sacrifice, and why Christ himself should associate his supreme self-sacrifice with the Paschal Lamb. But even the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who dwells more than any other New Testament writer upon the Levitical antitypes of Christ, shows their insufficiency, and precedes his exposition of them by majestic emphasis on the humanity of Christ — as distinct from an official priesthood — and by illustration of this from those human aspects of vicarious service in the Old Testament which fill his opening chapters. This example, unfortunately for Christianity, has been misunderstood, not by the greatest theologians, but by the smaller ones, and by generation after generation of popular preachers. It is because Christian divines have dwelt too much on the Old Testament system of sacrifices and too little upon the figures of Jeremiah, the suffering remnant and the Servant of the Lord : too much upon the animal types of the Cross, and too little upon the human forerunners of Christ: that their explanations of the vicarious character of the passion and death of the Redeemer have so often been mechanical and repulsive. Certainly in our day, when animal sacrifices have so long ceased to speak to the imagination and conscience of men, it is the direst blunder a preacher may commit to dwell upon them except for the barest of exegetical purposes. If we are to get our fellows to believe in the redemptive virtue of Christ's Cross, it will be by proving to them that vicarious suffering and its ethical virtue are no arbitrary enactments of God, but natural to life and inevitable wherever sin and holiness, guilt and love, encounter and contend. 'Non est dolor nisi de amore amisso, quanto profundior erat amor tanto altius tangit dolor.'[1] And in this we shall succeed most readily by proving, as we can do from the history which we have been traversing, that the figure of a Sufferer, holy and undefiled, by whose stripes we are healed, by whose bearing of our iniquities we are justified, was derived and confidently expected by men, not because Heaven had arbitrarily proclaimed it, but out of their own experiences of life and death, the very elements of which provided them with their marvellous picture of him."[2]

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[1] Kautsch, *Die Apocryphen*, *u. s. w.*, II. 160.

The second and third questions, and others besides them, will come into further consideration as we proceed. We need only pause to note the difficulty which theologians have found in combining Paul's doctrine of reconciliation with other elements of his system. If reconciliation is "objective" as well as "subjective," — to use the current antithesis, — if it involves an adjustment of God toward man as well as a change in man's attitude to God, how, then, can God himself provide for it? In what possible sense can he reconcile or satisfy himself or provide for the appeasement of his own wrath? Can God do something, or arrange to have something done, whereby his own feeling shall be changed? But if it is said that the divine love provides for the satisfaction of justice, does not this unwarrantably narrow the divine love and quite as unwarrantably divide the divine nature? Shall we conclude with Principal Simon that "love and anger *per se* are mutually exclusive"; that a father, for example, cannot be angry with his child without ceasing, to that extent, to love him, and that, therefore, the only course open to God is "whilst angry, carefully to search for means of vanquishing the indifference (of men), and converting the contemptuous aversion into loving regard"?[1] This view is adopted, no doubt, in deference to Paul, but what, then, becomes of Paul's own teaching that "God commendeth his love to us" in the redemptive death of Christ? If this method of explanation is not feasible, can we find a better one? If, as Dr. Dale says, God cannot both demand and provide the ransom; "he could not pay it to himself,"[2] what then? To whom could he pay it? Shall we answer with several of the Church fathers, "to Satan," or with Dr. Dale himself, "to the divine law"? The former answer deserts Pauline principles entirely, since, *ex hypothesi*, it is not Satan, but God, who requires to be satisfied; the latter does the same, and, in addition, deifies an abstraction, as if there were any such thing as God's law above or apart from God, to which God himself could render tribute.[3] These illustrations may serve to exhibit the difficulties which beset the customary procedure in the treatment of Paul's idea of expiation. Taken as a "hard, dogmatic theorem" it is seen, in the hands of those who so regard it, to yield not only the most divergent results, but to give rise to inferences which it is by no means easy to reconcile with Paul's own language concerning the action of God and the nature of salvation.

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[1] Hugo of St. Victor, on Gen. vi. 6.

[2] *Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament*, pp. 170–172.

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[1] *The Redemption of Man*, pp. 260, 261.

[2] *Atonement*, p. 357.

[3] See Adamson, Art. *Reconciliation*, in Hastings's *D. B.*

We have seen that the author of Hebrews interprets Christ's death in terms of sacrifice. But he is careful to explain that it is not a sacrifice of the Levitical order. He insists upon the inefficacy of all animal offerings. The blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin. Of what sort, then, is Christ's sacrifice? It is the offering on our behalf, and as our representative, of a pure and spotless spiritual life. The solidarity of Christ with mankind receives strong emphasis. Sanctified and Sanctifier are of one family. He shared in our flesh and blood, identified himself with the seed of Abraham, was made like unto his brethren, submitted himself to our temptations. This is the practical use which the author makes of the categories of priesthood and sacrifice. They serve to emphasize the representative character of his person and his work. They accentuate his sympathy, his unity with men, and his participation in their lot and life. This oneness with mankind is the essential condition of his priesthood. "It was fitting, morally necessary, that in all things he be made like unto his brethren that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God to make expiation for the sins of the people."

We have seen, furthermore, how by making use of the Philonic distinction of the higher and the lower, the heavenly and the sensible worlds, the author really takes Christ out of the class of earthly priests and gives to his person and work an entirely superior character and significance. His priesthood is of a wholly different nature. The Melchizedek story is used to accentuate its independence of all earthly conditions; but it is chiefly the Alexandrian conception of the intelligible world which is used to illustrate its superiority. The priesthood and sacrifice of Christ, in their inmost significance, have nothing in common with the temporary, carnal, and ineffective institutions of Judaism. They belong to a different world — the world of heavenly and eternal reality. It was not material blood or animal life which constituted the essence of his sacrifice, but "an eternal spirit" of condescending, sympathetic, and suffering love. The popular interpretation of this Epistle commonly assumes that because its author expounds the work of redemption in the terminology of sacrifice, therefore its meaning is to be determined throughout by reading it in the light of Leviticalism. But the whole point of the exposition turns on the *contrast* between Christ's sacrifice and the Levitical offerings. It is different from them in every respect. The priest is of a different order, is connected with a different system, ministers in a different sanctuary, and makes an offering of an entirely different kind. The author lays the strongest emphasis upon the insufficiency of all the material and outward elements and aspects of sacrifice. These are but the pictures and semblances of reality. In its higher and true meaning sacrifice belongs to the heavenly or spiritual world — as we should say, to the world of ethical truth and personal relationships. The capital fact to be observed is that in a way peculiar to his training and habits of thought the author ethicizes the whole subject of sacrifice and ascribes to Christ's offering of himself a wholly different nature from that which belongs to the Levitical oblations. To overlook this fact in the study of the Epistle would be like overlooking the difference between Paul's doctrine of justification and the Pharisaic doctrine, because Paul uses the juridical terminology which was current in the Jewish schools.

Another point of special importance is the direct way in which Christ's work is correlated with the moral life of man. His offering cleanses the conscience and renews the heart. Sacrificial blood purifies ceremonially; his blood purifies morally. The author's doctrine of the aim and effect of Christ's work is very simple — so simple that we are at a loss to know how he conceived Christ's sacrifice as accomplishing this result. It is common, at this point, to interpolate enough of Paulinism to supply an answer to this question. This would be less objectionable if it were always plainly stated that the explanation is interpolated. But this procedure is, to say the least, precarious. As we have seen, the author makes no use of the Pauline ideas of a satisfaction rendered to righteousness as a condition precedent of forgiveness. In some way he conceived the sacrifice of Christ as directly operative in salvation.

Finally, I would call attention to the fact that Jesus' offering of himself is something more than dying. As in his own teaching, he is represented as giving his life for men. It is *life* not *death* which is the essence of all true sacrifice. Even in the Levitical system the blood is sacrificial because "the blood is the life." This thought is greatly emphasized and elaborated in our Epistle by means of the conception of a perpetual ministry in heaven — a continuous offering of his life on behalf of his people. For our author the same forces, principles, and laws which were operative in the life, work, and sufferings of Jesus on earth are perpetually operative on behalf of the salvation of men.[1]

It is evident that if the interpretation which I have given of the New Testament data is correct, or even approximately correct, the doctrine of the saving import of Christ's death was the subject of a considerable development even within the first Christian century. The teaching of Jesus that he had come to give his life, that is, to devote himself in utmost service to men, and that this self-devotion would involve him in the endurance of suffering and death, was taken up after his departure and elaborated now in terms of the current doctrine of the vicarious sufferings of the righteous and again in terms of the Jewish sacrificial ritual. Though influenced by both these forms of thought, Paul went behind them both and raised the question of the relation of this saving deed of Christ to the ethical nature of God. The vicarious and the sacrificial ideas were the current coin of Jewish thought, and even though they had in a measure hardened into dogma, still they had much of the fluidity and indefiniteness of the popular religious feeling and practice with which they were identified. Did the righteous in Israel who suffered *with* the guilty and so *for the sake of* the guilty also suffer, in the proper sense, *instead of* the guilty? How far the doctrine may have taken this definite form of a strict substitution it is difficult to say. It is quite certain that, generally speaking, the thought of vicarious suffering was not so definite and precise. Much the same must be said concerning sacrifice. Though in its original intention and idea the offering was not viewed as a substitute for the offerer, but as his gift of adoration or devotion to the Deity, yet evidence is not wanting that in the late period the ideas of a literal substitution and of a transfer of sin had gained currency. It was a conception which lay near to hand — all the more so as ritual was magnified and took on more and more an *opus operatum* character. The idea that by a literal transfer of guilt the Lord should lay upon another, or upon a sacrificial victim, the iniquities of the sinner, is so clear, so simple, and so easy, that it would naturally commend itself to a mode of thought for which religion consisted primarily in ritual and ceremony. It is a theory which presupposes and fosters no strenuous moral ideas of religion. It would be safe to predict that if the apostle Paul is to make use of it, he will ethicize, deepen, and transform it and will never tolerate the superficial idea of an easy, mechanical transfer of man's guilt and penalty to another by which the sinner shall be exempted from the demands and operation of moral law. We have seen that this is the case. Paul makes use of the conception of substitution, but at the same time, by his intensely ethical view of God's requirements and his mystical conception of man's spiritual relation to Christ as the second Adam, he has deepened this substitution into a moral identification or solidarity.

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[1] *Cf.* Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, ch. xxi., on *The Theological Import of the Epistle.*

The outstanding peculiarity of the Pauline thought concerning expiation is that he has explicitly correlated the subject with the ethical nature of God. Just as he was the first Christian thinker to raise questions as to the relation of Christ's person to the metaphysical nature of God, so was he the first to seek to define the way in which the death of Christ revealed and satisfied the immanent righteousness of God. In this effort he was the forerunner of all the profoundest thought of later times which could not content itself, as naïve religious feeling may do, with some such mechanical conception as that Christ has paid our debt, but necessarily presses behind all such figures of speech and asks what are the personal relationships and the moral realities with which the work of Christ is concerned. We have seen that there are differing judgments among interpreters as to how far these deeper problems are considered in other New Testament books, such as 1 Peter, Hebrews, and the Johannine writings. The popular assumption, which some scholars seek to justify, is that the Pauline thought is everywhere implied and more or less fully expressed. It seems to me, however, that while the relation of Christ's work to the divine nature is, indeed, touched upon in these writings, no one of these authors has definitely proposed the problem to himself, as Paul did. The nearest approximation to it is found in John, who has so profoundly connected the person of Christ with the interior life of God. It would be inevitable that this method of thought should be more or less applied to the work of Christ, and this we find to be the case in the deduction of the "propitiation for sin" from the nature of God as love. But this writer's immediate and primary concern, especially in his Gospel, is with the person of Christ, rather than with the problems raised by his sufferings and death. The focus of his thought and interest, to speak in modern terms, is the incarnation, not the atonement. So far as the author of Hebrews uses the facts of the ritual he interprets them in the popular sense; the originality and unique value of his exposition lie in his viewing these categories, as applied to Christ, *sub specie aeternitatis*. The other New Testament books furnish no elaboration of the subject from the point of view under consideration. The early apostolic discourses assert a providential character and purpose for the death of Christ, but do not carry us further; 1 Peter depicts the spotless Lamb in the spirit of Isa. liii, but proposes no explanation of the necessity of his death; the Apocalypse makes frequent use of the current sacrificial language, but yields no view of the relation of Christ's death to the divine law or nature, unless it may be inferred from such rhetorical figures as "the Lamb standing in the midst of God's throne" (v. 6), suggesting that love and sacrifice are at the heart of God's sovereignty.[1]

The three forms of New Testament thought, then, which may fairly be said to furnish the elements of a theological theory of atonement are these: (1) the deduction of propitiation from the divine love (John); (2) the exposition of Christ's sacrifice as a fact of the heavenly world, the eternal order (Hebrews); and (3) the elaboration of the conception of Christ's death as a penal substitute for the death which sin had deserved — a satisfaction to law or justice, whereby the obstacle to the operation of grace is removed; a satisfaction for which, however, God in his love provides (Paul). It so happens that in the order of complexity and elaborateness the chronological order of those theories is exactly reversed. Paul's is the earliest, but the most elaborate. John's is the simplest, though he wrote latest. Ever since the New Testament period reflective thought has been occupied with the problems thus suggested and defined. One who is familiar with the history of theology can detect the presence, combination, and modification of these points of view in the various theories of redemption. Paul's conceptions have been by far the most determining, but the other points of view have, in recent times, come into greater prominence. Some still maintain a formal unity among all the types of New Testament reflection; to others, as to myself, the unity appears rather in the underlying conceptions of God and of the inner nature of salvation. Some still maintain the perpetually binding character of Paul's Jewish thought-forms; others venture to seek for Paul's fundamental religious convictions beneath these and are of opinion that though his Christian theology is cast in these moulds, it is not identical with them. What is Pauline? What is scriptural? Is every conception of which Paul made use a necessary part of his religion, and of ours, — physical death due to sin, our sin due to Adam's,[1] Christ's speedy, visible return to earth? As I have frequently intimated, it seems to me that no fruitful investigation of the beginnings of Christian theology can be made without recognizing the distinction between the contingent thought-forms of the first Christian thinkers and the essential religious life and fundamental Christian certainties concerning God and the experience of salvation which they were seeking to expound and to philosophize. Christianity is not identical with the special modes of thought which any particular thinker, speaking the language of his special circle or peculiar education, may use to illustrate and convey to others the most effective impression of its truths. If so, with which of several New Testament types of thought is it identical, — with the ethicism of John, the Alexandrianism of Hebrews, or the legalism of Paul? The religion of the New Testament is something more than a composite of the various arguments, analogies, and illustrations employed by its writers.[2]

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[1] The phrase "written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (xiii. 8; so A. V. and R. V.), which has been so often used as a text for the doctrine of "eternal atonement" (see, *e.g.* Hitchcock's *Eternal Atonement*), is almost certainly a mistranslation. The phrase "from the foundation of the world" should be connected with "written," a construction to which we have an exact parallel in Rev. xvii. 8. (So R. V., marg.; Twentieth Century New Testament; Weizsäcker's Translation, and Am. R. V. So, also, Ewald, De Wette, Bleek, Düsterdieck, Simcox, and most modern commentators.)

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[1] For a frank and thorough investigation and estimation of the Pauline ideas of sin, see Tennant, *The Fall and Original Sin*, ch. xi. Elsewhere Mr. Tennant writes: "We take the responsibility upon ourselves of endeavoring to discriminate between the thought and knowledge which an apostle derived from the common intellectual surroundings of his time and the essential contents of the Christian revelation of God and morality which he sought to express in terms of it. The one element abides and grows. The other is transitory and incomplete; it invites continual translation and restatement, which is always to be undertaken, however, in the same spirit as characterized the truth's first formulation." *The Origin and Propagation of Sin*, p. 146.

[2] "Die sogenannte practische Erklärung der Schrift, welche vielleicht den werthvollsten Bestandtheil aller practischen Theologie ausmacht,

In this general review of the scriptural data bearing upon the doctrine of salvation, and especially in the final summary, I have aimed to bring out the salient features of each of the principal types of New Testament teaching. Partly because of limitations of space, and partly on account of the large place which the subject holds in theological discussions and controversies, I have given special attention to the question of the relation of the death of Christ to the salvation of men. I will conclude this survey by illustrating the variety of forms in which, throughout the New Testament, the significance of Christ's death is represented and illustrated. This I can best do by availing myself of a collation of the relevant passages made by Schmiedel:[1] "The Epistle of James exhibits a Christianity without any reflection upon the saving significance of Christ's death. To Jesus himself his death appeared — until within a short time before its occurrence — as a possibly avoidable appointment of God. It has the character of an unwitting sin of the Jews in Acts iii. 13–15, 17: 'The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Servant Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied before the face of Pilate, when he had determined to release him. But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Prince of life; whom God raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And now, brethren, I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.'[2] It is viewed as the result of a divine destination of the Messiah to suffering, but without having a saving purpose ascribed to it, in Acts iii. 18, 'But the things which God foreshewed by the

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kann an Bedeutung nur gewinnen, wenn das zu erreichende Ziel so gesteckt werden muss, dass es in Zukunft gilt, die Religion des Neuen Testamentes zu verkündigen, ohne desshalb neutestamentliche Lehrbegriffe zu predigen." Holtzmann, *Neutest. Theol.* I. x.

[1] *Theol. Zeitschrift aus der Schweitz*, 1893, p. 227 *sq.*, quoted by Holtzmann, *Neutest. Theol.* I. 372. I have merely translated the passage and, in addition, have cited the principal illustrative texts, instead of giving only the references to them.

[2] *Cf.* v. 30.

mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled.' It serves as a means of exalting Jesus himself to heavenly glory in Jn. xii. 23 *sq.:* 'And Jesus answereth them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone ; but if it die, it beareth much fruit. He that loveth his life loseth it ; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.'[1] Through it he learns obedience according to Heb. v. 1 *sq.; e.g.* 'Though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered ; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation.' It serves his own consecration, with the wider purpose of consecrating his disciples, in Jn. xvii. 19–26; *e.g.* 'For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.' It is a purifying offering for his people in Eph. v. 2 and 25 *sq.; e.g.* 'Walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odour of a sweet smell.' It is an offering of deliverance and at the same time a covenant offering, according to Jesus' last indication in Mk. xiv. 22–24, 'My blood of the covenant shed for many.' Again it is an exemption offering, to be understood according to the true idea of Isa. liii, but not permanently adequate and therefore requiring to be supplemented by the suffering of Paul (and in principle also of others), according to Col. i. 24, 'Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the Church.' With a one-sided reference to the ceremonial law, it is represented as a covenant offering in Heb. ix. 15–20 and x. 29 : 'Mediator of a new covenant' ; 'the blood of the covenant,' etc. It subserves the reconciliation of Jews and heathen, as a kind of peace offering, in Eph. ii. 13–16 : 'But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the twain one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.' It reconciles the angelic powers with God in Col. i. 20, 'Through him to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.' It appears as an atoning offering for sin, without more exact determination, in 1 Cor. xv. 3; Mt. xxvi. 28; Eph. i. 7; Jn. i. 29, and elsewhere ('Christ died for our sins'; 'my blood shed for many unto remission of sins'; 'redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses'; 'the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world'); with one-sided reference to the ceremonial law, without substitutionary endurance of punishment, in Heb. v. 1, 3, vii. 27, and ix. 26, 28 ('A High Priest offering both gifts and sacrifices for sins'; 'he offered a sacrifice for sins once for all when he offered up himself'; 'manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself'; 'offered to bear the sins of many'); as a substitutionary satisfaction to penal righteousness in Rom. iii. 25 *sq.*, 'whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, by his blood, to shew his righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God.' It is a ransom from the curse of the law in Gal. iii. 13; Rom. iii. 24; 1 Cor. vi. 20, and vii. 23 ('Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us'; 'justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus'; 'ye were bought with a price'). It means the destruction of the power of the devil in Heb. ii. 14 *sq.:* 'that he might bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the devil,' etc.; annihilation of the power which dwells in the flesh and compels to sin, in Rom. viii. 3 *sq.:* 'God sending his own Son . . . condemned sin in the flesh,' etc.; is viewed as a vanquishing of the inclination that leads to sin in 1 Pet. i. 18, ii. 24, and iv. 1 ('redeemed from your vain manner of life'; 'bare our sins . . . that we might live unto righteousness'; 'since Christ has suffered, . . . arm yourselves with the same mind'). It occasions the sending of the Holy Spirit according to Jn. xv. 26, xvi. 7;[1] 'If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.' It serves, on the analogy of the ceremonial law, for the consecration of the heavenly temple, in connection with perpetual intercession before God, in Heb. vii. 25, ix. 21–24, and x. 19: 'The heavenly things, or places, themselves must be cleansed with better sacrifices than these' (animal-offerings), and opens the way to the preparation of the place of eternal blessedness in heaven according to Jn. xii. 32, xiv. 2 *sq.*, and xvii. 24, 'If I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye shall be also.' Only the characteristic passages are herewith adduced."

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[1] *Cf.* xvii. 1.

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[1] *Cf.* vii. 39.

PART II

THE PRINCIPAL FORMS OF THE DOCTRINE

CHAPTER I

THE COMMERCIAL THEORY OF ANSELM

It lies outside the plan of the present work to write the history of the doctrine of salvation in the Church. For that the reader is referred to the standard histories of Christian doctrine.[1] It is, however, germane to our purpose, and will greatly facilitate our subsequent discussions, to outline the principal types of theory which have obtained in Christian thought regarding the specific problem of atonement. By means of such a sketch it can best be shown in what various ways the death of Christ has been interpreted and how Christian reflection has attached itself now to one, now to another, of the biblical representations of the subject. We shall cover the ground which we most need to survey if we review the "commercial" satisfaction theory of Anselm,—noting the transformation which it experienced at the hands of the Reformation and post-Reformation theologians,— the governmental theory of Grotius, and the more recent and present-day interpretations. While precise classification is impracticable, it will be sufficient for our illustrative purpose to distinguish, among present-day theories, three general types of thought: (1) That which insists upon a strict substitution and ascribes a penal character to the sufferings of Christ. This type of theory is in line with the post-Reformation doctrine. (2) The theories of a satisfaction to the ethical nature, especially to the holiness of God, which, however, repudiate the idea of a penal substitution or equivalence. This group of views is more or less closely akin to the governmental theory. (3) The moral views which aim to interpret the work of Christ in terms of personal relationship and influences.

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[1] *E.g.* Fisher's *History of Christian Doctrine* and Ritschl's *Critical History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation.* A historical sketch of the doctrine of atonement is given in the appendix to Lidgett's work, *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*, and another, somewhat more limited in range, in the appendix to Moberly's *Atonement and Personality.* I have frequently consulted these expositions, but have had recourse chiefly for my illustrative materials to the writings of the authors whose views I have sketched.

The earliest Church Fathers made no attempt to construct theories of atonement. They viewed the death of Christ as the fulfilment of prophecy, especially of Isa. liii, and, in this view, as the supreme attestation of Christ's mission.[1] Clement of Rome sees in the Lord's death a proof of the divine love, but does not further define its relation to the nature of God. The Epistle of Barnabas, like the Epistle to the Hebrews, refers to the Saviour's death in terms of sacrifice, but offers no philosophy of its necessity or efficacy. The writings of Ignatius regard the love shown in Christ's death as a cleansing, life-bestowing power, and are fond of depicting his body and blood as the spiritual nourishment of the soul. The Epistle to Diognetus couples with the idea that God's love is supremely manifested in the death of his Son, the doctrine of a "sweet exchange," a transfer of our iniquities to Christ and of his righteousness to us. Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria contemplate Christianity as the divine philosophy. For them, as in the Fourth Gospel, the thought of revelation is paramount. In the view of the former, Christ suffered "as if accursed," "though he was blameless"; according to the latter, his death was a martyrdom endured in fidelity to the truth, "in imitation of whom the apostles suffered for the churches which they founded." But though in Justin's view, Christ "endured the curses of all," no explanation is given why this was necessary. Tertullian introduced the term "satisfaction," though he placed this satisfaction in penitence. We are "released from penalty by the compensating exchange of repentance." He offers no theory of the death of Christ.

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[1] "To them it was not the atonement, but the incarnation, which was the centre of Christian faith as of Christian life. The Fathers see in Christ's death, not an isolated act, or even an isolated sacrifice, but the natural consummation of that one great act of self-devotion whose unbroken energy stretched from the conception to the cross." Oxenham, *The Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement*, p. 166.

The first definite theory of the saving import of Christ's death is the view that it was a conquest of Satan, or, more specifically, a ransom paid to him to induce him to release man from his power. This was the dominant note in Christian thought on the subject for nearly a thousand years,—from Irenæus (d. *ca.* 200) to Anselm (d. 1109),—though it was often combined with various views, penal, ethical, and mystical, which were quite incongruous with it. Sometimes it was held that Satan had legitimately acquired this power, since by sin man had voluntarily become his vassal. In this view the Almighty was not at liberty to use force or deception in procuring man's release. Now in Christ, the representative of the race, argues Irenæus, man freely chose to repudiate his servitude to Satan and to return to God. Here Christ's redemption of man is viewed as accomplished by moral means. The aim of his death is to induce and help us to forsake allegiance to Satan and return to obedience to God. But it was common to represent the recovery of man as accomplished by force or fraud. According to Origen, Satan was deceived in supposing that he could hold the soul of Christ captive. He relinquished his control of man in return for what he supposed would be a control of Christ, but he miscalculated the strength of the latter, and lost his sway over both. Gregory of Nyssa explicitly says that God employed deceit to defeat Satan, but holds that this was legitimate on account of the good end in view — the salvation of man, and even, ultimately, of the devil himself. Gregory the Great describes Satan as caught with the hook of Christ's divinity which had been concealed in his humanity. To Peter Lombard the cross was a trap baited with Christ's blood.

But the elements of other theories are also present during this period. The penal satisfaction theory is found in Origen and Gregory the Great. The former does not hesitate to declare that by his offering, Christ has rendered God propitious toward men. Gregory holds that in yielding himself up to suffering and death at the hands of sinful men, Christ was appeasing God's wrath by taking on himself the penalty of our sins. But the germs of "moral influence theories" are also found. We saw that, according to Irenæus, Christ induced men by persuasion to forsake Satan. Although Augustine employed the common conception of a redemption from Satanic power, his view of the subject in general completely transcends it. He will not affirm that God could have accomplished man's salvation by no other means than Christ's death, but holds that this was the most suitable and effective method. "For what," he says, "was so necessary to raise our hope and to liberate from despair of immortality the minds of mortals cast down by the condition of mortality, as that it should be proved to us how highly God valued us and how much he loved us?"[1] "The spirit of the Mediator showed how it was through no punishment of sin that he came to the death of the flesh, because he did not leave it against his will, but because he willed, when he willed, as he willed."[2] "What is meant," he asks, "by 'justified in his blood'? What power is there in this blood that those who believe should be justified in it? And what is meant by 'being reconciled by the death of his Son'? Was it, indeed, so that when God the Father was wroth with us, he saw the death of his Son for us, and was appeased toward us? Was then his Son already so far appeased toward us that he even deigned to die for us, while the Father was still so far wroth, that except his Son died for us, he would not be appeased? . . . Unless the Father had been already appeased, would he have delivered up his own Son, not sparing him for us? . . . But I see that the Father loved us also before, not only before the Son died for us, but before he created the world; . . . therefore together both the Father and the

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[1] *On the Trinity*, Bk, XIII, ch, x,

[2] *Op. cit.*, Bk. IV. ch. xiii.

Son and the Spirit of both work all things equally and harmoniously."[1] Elsewhere he expresses the view that it was the aim of the Mediator of life to make it plain to men that it is not death which is to be feared, but ungodliness — a noticeable anticipation of a modern view that by his heroic and trustful endurance of death in fidelity to his calling Christ has set men free from the fear and dominion of death, consecrated for all his followers the path of suffering, and transformed death into a trustful surrender of the soul into the hands of God.[2] Others interpret Christ's death in terms more exclusively ethical or mystical. For Abelard the passion is a proof of love, which by awakening in us a responsive love liberates us from the bondage of sin and fear, and delivers us into the liberty of the sons of God. For Peter Lombard the cross is the pledge of a love so great that by it our hearts are moved and kindled to a love to God which is itself the essence of salvation. For Bernard of Clairvaux salvation is participation in Christ's vicarious love.

It will be apparent from this brief sketch how inaccurate it is to represent, without qualification, the theory of a ransom paid to the devil as the patristic view of atonement. It was really but one of a number of forms of thought which were current and often incongruously combined. We have seen that the ideas of a mystical identification with Christ in his vicarious love, of a deliverance from sin by an obedience and love quickened by his passion, and of a substitutionary endurance by him of the chastisement of our sins, were all more or less fully elaborated and applied. As respects this "military theory" of a ransom paid to Satan, it is evident that it is due to unwarranted inferences from a figure of speech.[1] If God paid the life of Christ as a purchase price to buy man's freedom, to whom, it was asked, did he pay it? Not to himself, it was answered; for this there was no occasion; moreover, God could not pay a price to himself. He must, therefore, have paid it to Satan, who was holding man captive under his power. It has been suggested that the ransom theory, in this form of it, was germane to modes of thought prevailing in an age of brigandage, as Anselm's view of a satisfaction to God's violated personal honor was natural in an age of chivalry.[2] The latter, as we shall see, rejected entirely the notion of a compensation to Satan and substituted that of a payment to God. To an exposition of this epoch-making theory let us now turn.[3]

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[1] *Op. cit.*, Bk. XIII. ch. xi. It should be remembered, however, that by "us" Augustine means only those who have been predestined to salvation by a fixed and unalterable decree. God loves only the elect — only those whom he has eternally chosen to salvation in Christ. This fact detracts not a little from the apparent liberality of such descriptions of the love and graciousness of God which are declared to be antecedent to atonement. Calvin, as we shall see later on, quotes passages of this sort from Augustine with approval, but, of course, with the same understanding of their terms. It is worth noting, however, that such writers do predicate an operation of the divine grace toward sinners antecedent to the supposed placation of God, even if those who are to be benefited by it are only an arbitrarily selected number.

[2] So Wendt, *Teaching of Jesus*, II. 223–239. *Cf.* Heb. ii. 15.

The aim of the treatise is to answer the question which constitutes its title, *Cur Deus Homo?* What were the occasion and necessity of the incarnation? It consists of two parts, having twenty-five and twenty-three short chapters respectively, and is written in the form of a Socratic dialogue. The questions and difficulties are proposed by Anselm's pupil, Boso, to whom the master makes answer. The first ten chapters are preliminary and are taken up with such topics as the relation of reason to faith, the congruity with reason of the virgin-birth, the completeness of man's ruin in sin, and the sense in which the

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[1] It should be said, however, that if the popular and metaphorical language of Scripture is to be cast into rigid dogmatic formulæ, this theory is better justified than some of those which supplanted it, and are still popularly current; for example, the death of Christ as the "payment of a debt" to God. The disappearance of this "patristic view" is a prophecy of the fate of others which are built up by essentially the same method and with a similar sort of biblical basis.

[2] Ménégoz, *Le Péché et la Rédemption d'après St. Paul*, p. 239.

[3] In this exposition I have utilized for purposes of quotation the translation of *Cur Deus Homo?* by James G. Vose in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vols. XI and XII (1854, 1855), now republished, in connection with other writings of Anselm, by Sidney N. Deane (Chicago, 1903).

Father required the death of Christ. In chapter v the argument that God might have redeemed men by means of some created angel or perfect man, such as Adam was, is answered by pointing out that redeemed men will, of course, belong to, and be the servants of, him who redeems them, and thus, in the case supposed, they would belong to a created being, and not to God, which is absurd. Here we have one of the formative ideas of the subsequent discussion. In chapter vi Boso voices the difficulties and objections of unbelievers in regard to the idea of redemption in general: If God is willing to save men, what is to hinder him from doing so directly, without the intervention of a ransom? In the next chapter he assails the current solution of this question, to the effect that Satan had certain just rights and claims over men which God must discharge by payment. The master seems to acquiesce in his pupil's view that while it is just for God, on account of man's sin, to permit Satan to exercise a certain control over man and to inflict sufferings upon him, yet he holds that Satan has no just rights in the case on his own account, and therefore, as he says afterward, God does not owe him anything, except punishment (II. xix), and cannot, therefore, pay him anything else. Finally, Boso asks if it does not seem incongruous with the nature of God that he should redeem man at such cost of labor and suffering. Anselm explains in answer that God himself cannot, indeed, suffer, but that since Christ's person consists of two natures, his humanity may suffer while his deity remains impassible. The next question is bolder still: How can a just God condemn an innocent person to suffer for the guilty? Anselm replies: God, the Father, did not compel, but only permitted, his Son thus to suffer; he endured death voluntarily. But, rejoins Boso, do not the Scriptures say that in dying he obeyed the Father's will, fulfilled the Father's commandment, and drank the cup which the Father gave him? To this question Anselm replies that a distinction is to be made between what God directly demanded of Christ, and what he must experience because it lay in the path of obedience. For example: Death is the penalty of sin; now God could not have required of Christ that he should die, for he was sinless. But Christ found that death was involved in the general course of his obedience, and accordingly he voluntarily endured it, as if God had commanded it. As though not wholly satisfied with this explanation, Anselm suggests others, for example: The Son must have had the will, or willingness, to die as a gift from the Father. Since the Father imparted to him the inclination to die for men, he may properly be said to have given him commandment to that effect. Again: When one does not prevent anything which he can prevent, he may be said to desire it. But granting all this, the pupil urges: How is it fitting that such a Father should desire the death of such a Son? Why could not God save men in some other way? How does the death of Christ avail for the salvation of men? These are the questions to which the main argument, beginning with chapter x, addresses itself.

The remainder of the First Book is occupied in developing these six points: (1) Every creature *owes* obedience to God; this obedience is man's *debt of honor* to his Sovereign. (2) Sin is the non-payment of that debt; it is a *robbing* of God, a violation of his *rights* and of his *honor*. (3) For this act of robbery the sinner is bound to make *reparation*. Justice demands that he shall render *satisfaction* for this affront, this violation of the rights of his rightful Lord. (4) Now the punishment of sin would be such a satisfaction; but *if punishment is to be remitted*, some *other satisfaction* must be made which shall be an *adequate substitute for punishment* and fully meet its ends. (5) This satisfaction must completely *balance the sin* for which it is to satisfy; it must be as *meritorious* and as *pleasing* to God as sin is *heinous* and *hateful* to him. (6) *Man* is obviously *powerless* to render any such satisfaction and to discharge his own debt. I have italicized the keywords of the argument.

To the question why God should not forgive out of mere compassion upon repentance and return to obedience, Anselm replies that by sin man has not only robbed

God of his due, but has offended against his honor. The reparation must therefore be more than an equivalent for the sin, considered in the former aspect. It must compensate not only for the deprivation but for the affront. Now a mere return to obedience would not do that. It would leave God's honor unrequited. There would still be a debt unpaid — the debt due to his offended dignity, "and this it is impious even to think of." To this argument Boso responds, "I think that nothing more reasonable can be said" (I. xiii). But difficulties still remain: How would punishment preserve God's honor? and: Why has God allowed his honor to be violated, even in the slightest degree, by sin? Anselm replies that punishment is God's way of collecting his debts by force. In return for what man stole from him, God by punishment takes from man that to which he has a natural right; namely, happiness and every good, and thus accounts are evened. "Placet quod dicis," responds Boso. The second difficulty is met in a characteristic way. In an earlier chapter (ix), Anselm is at pains to show how God may be spoken of *as if* he required Christ's death, although the fact was that he only permitted it or imparted to Christ the inclination voluntarily to submit to it. In that connection he explains that what occurs *post hoc* may properly be spoken of *as if* it occurred *propter hoc;* for example: Christ is said in Scripture to have been exalted *propter mortem*, though the fact was that his exaltation was *post mortem*, "just as (he continues) our Lord was said to have increased in wisdom, and in favor with God; not that this was really the case, but that he deported himself *as if* it were so" (ille sic se habebat, ac si ita esset). In like manner he now declares that God was not *really* robbed of his honor at all by sin; but that man having made an effort to rob him, is treated *as if* he had done so. "No one can honor or dishonor God, as he is in himself; but the creature, as far as he is concerned, *appears to do this* when he submits or opposes his will to the will of God." "Satisfecisti objectioni meae," responds Boso.

The next three chapters (xvi–xviii) are a digression in which the master finds a motive for the redemption of men in the desire of God to recruit the depleted ranks of the angels. The places of the fallen angels must be filled; these doomed spirits cannot be recovered to holiness; hence their number can only be made good by the salvation of men. This idea seems, however, to involve the result that only just enough men will be saved to fill the vacant places; but Anselm presents a number of reasons, satisfactory to Boso, for thinking that God did not originally create all the angels which he intended to have. According to this view, the possible number of redeemed men may well be far larger than that of the fallen spirits, so that the original number created may not only be made good, but indefinitely increased by the salvation of men. The pupil expresses special gratitude for this demonstration which, according to the terms of the agreement, he had no right to expect. He is sure that the Lord loves such a "cheerful giver" as his master is proving himself to be in doing more than he promised. The discussion now returns to the point formerly made, that if sin is to be forgiven, a satisfaction must be made. A number of syllogisms are constructed to prove this, but they all rest, at last, on the assertion that the contrary would not be fitting (non decet). Boso declares that he could not doubt the proposition even if he were so disposed.

If, then, a satisfaction is to be made, it must be adequate — proportionate to the guilt of sin. Once more the pupil suggests that contrition, self-denial, abstinence, toils, and loving service to men might suffice, and reminds the master of the unconditional promise that he who turns from his wickedness shall live. But Anselm answers that all the good deeds and services mentioned by him are due in justice to God, and that though one pays them all, he does not thereby diminish in the least the sum of his back debts; the guilt of his past sin remains entirely uncancelled. As to the promise of forgiveness upon condition of repentance, it is declared to be applicable only to those who looked forward to Christ or to those who believe on him since his coming. All such assurances are conditioned upon satisfaction for sin. Consider, further, continues Anselm, how great a debt sin incurs. Suppose that God commanded you to look in one direction, would you be justified in looking in the opposite direction, even if the salvation of your soul and the preservation of the universe itself depended upon it? Of course not, answers Boso. If, then, the slightest sin is so enormous, how hopeless is it for man to think of discharging his debt to God. This impossibility is now demonstrated. What would be required in order to pay that debt is that, as man in his strength and vigor yielded to the devil and sinned, incurring thus the penalty of death, so now in his weakness and mortality he should conquer the devil by the pain of death, without sin. But in the moral impotence of his sinful state this is obviously impossible. Man, then, is utterly bankrupt. The homage which he can render to God by repentance, self-denial, and good works are no equivalent to his debt. Moreover, his sin renders him powerless to retrace the steps of his fall. But, interposes Boso, if he *cannot* pay, is he to blame if he *does not?* Yes, is the reply; his inability is itself a crime because he brought it on himself. This, then, is the point to which Book First conducts us: Man cannot be saved without full payment of the debt which his robbery of God incurred; but he himself is powerless to diminish it in the least; he can barely meet running expenses, to say nothing of discharging obligations created by past sin.

A concise summary of the main points developed in Book Second may aid the exposition: (1) It has been proved that *man is utterly powerless* to make the satisfaction required for sin. (2) *God* himself *must make it* if it is made at all; he alone *can* make it. (3) But it is *due* from man, not from God; man *ought to* make it, but God alone *can;* hence the necessity, if it is to be made, of a *God-man.* (4) This God-man has given to God *his own life* as a satisfaction for sin. This he was not under obligation to do; obedience he owed, but the yielding up of his life was a *free gift.* (5) Now as the *guilt* of even the least sin *outweighs all worlds* — everything not God, — so *the life of Christ* surpasses in value all worlds and creatures and *is more valuable than sin is heinous;* hence it is an *adequate equivalent* and balances the account in man's favor. (6) Now such a gift calls for a *reward. The saved are the reward* which God makes to Christ *for his gift* of his life. Here, too, I have italicized the words on which the argument chiefly turns.

A more particular account of the discussion is as follows: Man was made holy in order that he might be happy. Moreover, had he never sinned, he would never have died. These facts prove, by the way, that there must be a resurrection, that is, a restoration of the saved to the original perfection of humanity. Now we have seen that God can accomplish this restoration only on condition of a satisfaction for sin. But now, interposes Boso, you seem to have grounded man's salvation on a divine necessity, rather than on grace, — to which Anselm replies that it is a necessity which God has freely imposed upon himself. The work of salvation flows from his unchangeable goodness, and the conditions and manner of it are prescribed by his immutable honor.

Now no gift to God is adequate to satisfy for sin which is not greater and more valuable than all things, save God himself (majus quam omne quod præter Deum est — quam omne quod non est Deus), and the giver of it must be greater than all things, aside from God himself. It is evident that God alone can meet these conditions, and yet the payment demanded *is due from man.* Hence the answer to our question: *Cur Deus Homo?* Man *owes* the debt; God alone *can pay* it. If, therefore, it is to be paid at all, God must become man. But how can this be? After explaining a number of ways in which it cannot be (by sketching the various heretical views of Christ's person), Anselm declares, with no effort at explanation, that it is simply necessary for the purpose in view that the Saviour should be One who is both very God and very man — each nature being complete, and the two united entire, in one person. "Totum mihi placet, quod dicis," responds Boso.

He next proves that in order to pay man's debt the Saviour must be one of the race of men, and contends that it is fitting for him to be born of a woman, without union with man, since it was a woman who first by her sin brought all our evils and woes upon us. Then follow reasons why the Son only, of the persons of the Trinity, could become incarnate. These are based upon the baldest Tritheism and read like a fragment of mythological genealogy.

Christ, then, did not deserve to die ; his life could not be exacted of him as a debt, for he was sinless and divine. Now, inquires Boso, if he is God, could he sin ? Yes and no, replies Anselm. He could sin, if he chose to, but he could not choose to sin, therefore he could not sin. But, answers Boso, if he could not sin, had his virtue, then, any moral worth ? But, asks the master in reply, do we not praise God for his holiness, though we know that he cannot sin ? Inability to sin does not invalidate the worth of goodness. Well, then, urges Boso, why did not God make man incapable of sin and thus secure his goodness and happiness and save him from all the evil and suffering caused by sin ? This inquiry Anselm pronounces positively irreverent, and he deigns only the brief reply: Because, in that case, God would have made man equal to himself, which is preposterous. "I blush to have asked the question," says Boso.

Now, as has been shown, Christ's death was not *owed* to God, for he was sinless ; and only those deserve to die who have sinned. It rested with him as omnipotent God, to give or to withhold his life. The gift of it, therefore, was something over and above the requirement of obedience. It was a gift to the honor of the Father which the Son did not owe as a debt. In this connection Anselm takes occasion to refute the objection that, if Christ shared our weaknesses, he must have been both miserable and ignorant. He was not miserable, is the argument, because there is no misery in bearing a loss which one assumes willingly, and he could not have been ignorant because in assuming humanity God will take only such elements of it as are seemly and useful, and ignorance would not have been an advantage, but a hindrance, to his saving work.

We have seen that the slightest sin against God outweighs all other possible or conceivable evils. Something of infinite value is therefore required to balance the least sin. Now the gift of Christ's life is of this character; it is more amiable than sin is odious. It is able even to cancel the sin of his murderers, since it was in ignorance that they put him to death. Here arise two other questions: Can Christ's death save even Adam and Eve? and: How could he be sinless when born of a sinful mother? Anselm answers that many must have been saved before Christ's coming by a retroactive effect of his death, for otherwise it is quite inconceivable that the depleted ranks of the angels, which must be made good by the salvation of men, should have been recruited. Doubtless Adam and Eve were among those thus saved, for we cannot suppose that there was ever a time when the world was so unprofitable as to contain no human being who had gained the object for which he was made. As to the second question, it is answered that the virgin Mary was cleansed from sin by faith in her son before his birth, and so he was born in purity. Since, then, his mother's purity was from himself, it was really his own.[1]

Did the God-man, then, die from necessity? No; for he had the power to withhold his life, even though he could not wish to do so — just as he had power to lie, though his disposition which arises from himself infallibly prevented him from choosing to lie. Moreover, as God, he could be moved by no necessity. As it would not be power, but weakness, for God to wish to lie (whence its impossibility), so it would not be power, but weakness, for Christ to desire to withhold his life when once the purpose of salvation had been formed, and in view of the great good to be wrought by the gift of it. The pupil now summarizes what he considers to have been proved thus far: "By numerous and positive reasons you have shown that the restoration of mankind ought not to take place, and could not, unless man paid the debt which he owed to God for his sin. And this debt was so great that, while none but man was bound to discharge it, none but God could do so; so that he who does it must be both God and man. And hence arises a necessity that God should take man into unity with his own person, so that he who in his own nature was bound to pay the debt, but could not, might be able to do it in his character as God. In fine, you have shown that that man, who was also God, must be formed from the virgin, and from the person of the Son of God, and that he could be taken without sin, though from a sinful substance. Moreover, you have clearly shown the life of this man to have been so excellent and so glorious as to make ample satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, and even infinitely more."[1]

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[1] It will be remembered that the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the virgin, that is, of her freedom from the taint of original sin, did not become an official dogma of the Roman Catholic Church until 1854.

The final question is: How does the offering of Christ's life avail for salvation? It is a great gift to God's honor. Does it not then deserve a reward? But how can a reward be bestowed upon the Son of God himself who has need of nothing? Clearly the deserved recompense must be given to some one else, and to whom could it be so fitly given as to man for whose benefit Christ came to give his life as a satisfaction? This is our author's philosophy of salvation: It is the gift to man of the reward which Christ had merited by the payment of his life. Anselm denies the view long current, that this price is paid to the devil, for God owed the devil nothing but punishment, nor does man ever owe him anything except to conquer him. Whatever debts man owes, he owes to God, not to the devil.

Now, at last, declares Anselm, the compassion of God, which seemed lost out of sight while we were discussing God's holiness and man's sin, comes clearly into view as the motive and explanation of God's whole purpose and plan of salvation. The discussion closes with "infallible proofs" that Satan can never be saved, and with the confession of Boso that the solution of the one chief question at issue has thrown a flood of light upon the whole Bible, to which the master replies, "If we have said anything that needs correction, I am willing to make the correction, if it be a reasonable one."

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[1] Ch. xviii, *a*.

Sin, then, according to Anselm, is a violation of God's private rights, an affront to his infinite honor and majesty. The atonement is an act of homage to God of such transcendent value as to outweigh the sins of mankind and to make it right and proper for God to forgive them. These conceptions remained dominant during the scholastic period. There were, indeed, variations from them. Thomas Aquinas held that the method of salvation depended entirely upon the divine will. God might have saved man without any satisfaction, though he maintains that the mode of redemption chosen was the most suitable. Duns Scotus departs much farther from Anselm and declares that the merits of Christ's work depend entirely upon the divine will in accepting it; God might as well have saved man through the acts of Adam or of an angel had he chosen to do so.

Several times, in the course of his treatise, Anselm refers to the necessity that sins should be punished; but it is evident that his meaning is that they must either be punished or adequately satisfied and atoned for.[1] It is clear from his whole exposition that the satisfaction wrought by Christ is not contemplated as punishment, but as a substitute for punishment. Here is the point at which the Reformation and post-Reformation theology diverged from Anselm and from the mediæval theology in general. The Reformers appear to have narrowed the question regarding the saving benefits of Christ's death by considering not so much its general necessity and grounds, as its specific relation to forgiveness. Sin is viewed as a violation of God's inexorable law, and not merely as an affront to his honor. The necessity which now arises is not merely a necessity to vindicate his majesty; it is the necessity that sin be punished. It is no longer a question of God's dignity or honor, but of his inflexible justice. It is no longer, as with Anselm, a question of satisfaction *or* punishment, but of satisfaction *by* punishment. If, therefore, sin is to be forgiven, it must, first of all, be punished. These are the postulates of the Reformation doctrine, and it is apparent that they involve not merely a modification, but a transformation, of the theory of Anselm.[1] Some of the forerunners of the Reformation had held similar views. Wyclif, in explaining why God would not remit sin without a satisfaction, says that "his justice would not suffer it, but requires that each trespass be punished, either on earth or in hell." Wessel declares that "Christ is not only the Mediator between God and man, but is rather a Mediator for man between the God of justice and the God of mercy."

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[1] For example, in Bk. I. ch. xii., he says, "It is not proper for God *thus* to pass over sin unpunished," that is, to forgive it unconditionally, as he explains farther on: "to let the sinner go unpunished, *who makes no return to God* of what he has defrauded him." But this return has been made, of course, in Christ's payment of his life. Anselm's doctrine is not that of an unconditional divine necessity to punish; God may accept, and does accept, an equivalent act of payment or homage in place of punishment. Anselm's view is not properly a penal satisfaction theory, as it is sometimes represented, *e.g.* in Strong's *Systematic Theology*, pp. 407, 408.

In citing the opinions of Luther, some allowance must doubtless be made for his vehemence and rhetorical extravagance. He frequently describes Christ as suffering the penal consequences of the world's sin, represents him as standing in the sinner's place, and enduring the equivalent of his punishment. In his comment on Gal. iii. 13, he says that "God laid on Christ the sins of all men, saying to him: Be thou Peter, that denier; Paul, that persecutor, blasphemer, and cruel oppressor; David, that adulterer; that sinner which did eat the apple in Paradise; that thief which hanged upon the cross; and, in short, be thou the person which hath committed the sins of all men." In connection with 2 Cor. v. 21, he declares that Christ chose to be of all men "the greatest robber, murderer," etc., "a sinner who bears the sin" of men, and adds: "Should any one say, It is extremely absurd and irreverent to call the Son of God a sinner and accursed, I reply, If you wish to deny that he is a sinner and accursed, deny also that he suffered, was crucified and dead. For it is not less absurd to say that the Son of God was crucified, bore the penalties of sin and death, than to say that he was a sinner and accursed. If, indeed, it is not absurd to confess and believe that Christ was crucified between robbers, neither is it absurd to say that he was accursed and a sinner of sinners." But expressions like these must be balanced by Luther's mysticism and by his strong assertions of the divine love. It may well be doubted whether even this language, apparently descriptive of an external substitution and imputation, may not have had for its author a mystical sense; whether Christ's bearing of our sins was not primarily to Luther's thought a matter of inner spiritual experience, a carrying of the cross in his heart.[1]

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[1] *Cf.* Ritschl, *A Critical History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation*, pp. 196–203; Dale, *Atonement*, pp. 285–294; Lidgett, *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*, pp. 463–474.

Calvin is more guarded in his language. He raises the question how God could have become reconciled to us in Christ "unless he had already embraced us in gratuitous favor." To this he answers, in part, that the biblical language about reconciliation "is accommodated to our sense in order that we may better understand how miserable and calamitous is our condition out of Christ," though he does not mean by this that it is not "strictly true." He also speaks of God as reconciling us to himself "by abolishing whatever of evil is in us," and says that Christ does this by "the whole course of his obedience." Calvin's exposition is more like that of Augustine than it is like that of Luther. The work of redemption flows from God's love, and the necessity of it is grounded rather in a divine decree than in an immediate requirement of distributive justice. Still, there was in God's holiness an obstacle to forgiveness. God was angry at man as a sinner, even though he discovered something in him — his kinship to himself — that his goodness might love. With Augustine he holds that "in a wonderful and divine manner he both hated and loved us at the same time." "In this situation, Christ took upon himself and suffered the punishment which by the righteous judgment of God impended over all sinners, and by this expiation the Father has been satisfied and his wrath appeased."[1]

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[1] Ritschl declares: "Luther surpassed all previous theology when he brought love into prominence as the character which exhaustively expresses the Christian idea of God; and in this fundamental conception of God he recognizes also the ultimate determining motive for the redemption and reconciliation of the sinner that were wrought by Christ. However strongly he may insist upon God's wrath against sinners, however emphatically he may proclaim Christ's vicarious punishment as the means of appeasing it, his meaning is never that God's relation to sinful man has previously resolved itself wholly into one of wrath; that in that wrath his love had ceased, and could be reawakened only by the merits of Christ. . . . His true opinion is essentially that God's love as the ultimate motive of the sinner's redemption is the superior determination of his will, while penal justice or wrath is considered as the subordinate motive of his action in carrying out the work of redemption." *History*, p. 201. See, further, Dorner, *Lehre von der Person Christi*, II. 513 *sq.*; Campbell, *The Nature of the Atonement*, ch. ii.

This penal satisfaction theory was developed and elaborated by the post-Reformation divines of the seventeenth century, that period of Protestant scholasticism and hyper-orthodoxy. It rested upon a certain view of the justice of God. He *must* punish. His relation to the sinner is not that of private ownership or personal sovereignty; neither has he any choice of ways or means in dealing with sin. Retributive justice — the principle of *quid pro quo* — is primary and fundamental in his being and must express itself in penalty. Hence sin cannot be forgiven until it has first been punished.[1] This is the view which is elaborated by Turretin, Mastricht, Gerhard, and Quenstedt. For example, Gerhard writes: "Christ in the time of his passion and death, but especially in the garden at the foot of Mount Olivet, when he sweated blood, experienced in his most holy soul the bitterest tortures, griefs, terrors, and truly infernal anguish, and so thoroughly experienced the wrath of God, the curse of the law, and the penalties of hell. For how could he have truly taken our sins upon himself, and afforded a perfect satisfaction, unless he had truly felt the wrath of God, conjoined by an inseparable connection (individuo nexu) with sin? How could he have redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, unless he had fully experienced the judgment of an angry God (nisi judicium Dei irati persensisset)?"[2] Quenstedt declares that "Christ was substituted in the place of the debtors," and that "in his satisfaction he sustained all that the rigor of God's justice demanded, so much so that he felt even the very pains of hell, although not in hell or eternally."[3]

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[1] *Institutes*, Bk. II. ch. xvi. §§ 3, 4. Calvin constantly uses expressions like these: "Christ suffered the punishment of our sin and so satisfied the justice of God"; he "appeased God"; "reconciled God"; "appeased the wrath of God"; "rendered the Father favorable and propitious." He declares that "God was angry with us and must be appeased by a satisfaction"; that "God was our enemy till he was reconciled to us by Christ"; that "on Christ's righteous person was inflicted the punishment which belonged to us"; that "the guilt which made us obnoxious to punishment is transferred to him"; and that "he felt the severity of the divine vengeance." He interprets the article of the creed: "He descended into hell," to mean that "he suffered that death which the wrath of God inflicts on transgressions" and "endured in his soul the dreadful torments of a person condemned and irretrievably lost." Still Calvin insists with Augustine that God loved us before Christ placated him, and that he was moved by his "pure and gratuitous love," which "precedes our reconciliation in Christ," to plan and execute this appeasement of his wrath. Nor does he attribute salvation solely to the death of Christ, but also, in part, to his "whole life," though this idea is not developed. He is also at pains to explain that God was not personally hostile to or angry with Christ. His "punishment" was due to official, judicial necessity. II. xvii, *passim*.

We shall have occasion to return to this type of thought as it has been illustrated by more recent writers. The point to be noted here is, how wide a departure it is from the theory of Anselm. It took its rise, no doubt, in modifications of Anselm's view, but it has become a widely different theory, "the precise antithesis," as Dr. Dale says, "of the conception in the *Cur Deus Homo*." [1]

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[1] "Melanchthon makes God's forensic punishment-demanding justice to be the fundamental conception (in the idea of God) — justice which can be turned into grace only by means of the sacrifice of Christ. He therefore is the true author of the subsequent orthodox doctrine." Ritschl, *History*, p. 202.

[2] *Loci theologici*, Locus XVII, *De causa meritoria justificationis*, cap. ii. § 54.

[3] *Theologia Didactico-polemica*, I. 39.

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[1] Dale thus expresses the difference between the views of Anselm and those of Luther: "Anselm, though not with unvarying consistency, represents the voluntary submission of Christ to death as a transcendent act of righteousness and of devotion to the honour of God, and maintains that God rewarded Christ by forgiving the sins of men. Luther represents the death of Christ as the endurance of the suffering due to the sins of our race. On Anselm's theory, Christ has secured our salvation because in his death he clothed himself with the glory of a unique righteousness, for which God rewards him. On Luther's theory, Christ has secured our salvation because in his death he clothed himself with the sins of the human race, so that God inflicted on him the sufferings which the sins of the race had deserved. The theological distance between the theories can hardly be measured. They are alike only in this, that they both affirm that the death of Christ is the ground on which our sins are forgiven." *The Atonement*, p. 290.

CHAPTER II

THE GOVERNMENTAL THEORY OF GROTIUS

THE treatise of the distinguished Dutch jurist, Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), on the *Satisfaction of Christ*, was written in refutation of the theory of Socinianism. This theory was elaborated by Lælius Socinus (1525–1562) and, more fully, by his nephew, Faustus Socinus (1539–1604), and found expression in the manifesto of the Polish Unitarians called the Racovian Catechism, published in 1605. The system included an acute and radical criticism of the orthodox theory of atonement. Its chief exponent, Faustus Socinus, took common ground with Anselm in viewing sin as a violation of private right, and from this conception derived the conclusion that it is competent for God to pardon an affront to his majesty, without satisfaction, if he chooses. This was a conclusion which the principles of Anselm were powerless to exclude ; the Reformers and post-Reformation divines, however, had forestalled it by their definition of justice. According to them, justice meant the necessity to punish sin ; hence the possibility of forgiveness without a satisfaction, and, indeed, a *penal* satisfaction, was out of the question. Socinus challenged this definition of justice. He declared that God's justice is a name for his fairness and equitableness. What the orthodox called justice, that is, the determination to punish, is, like mercy, an effect of the divine will, and may be exercised or not, at God's option. It will be noticed that Socinus related distributive justice to the divine will in the same way as orthodoxy related mercy thereto ; in either case it was declared to be optional with God to exercise it or not ; in principle, the two extremes met. On this basis Socinus confuted the orthodox theory thus: The penalty of sin is eternal death; now if it be true that God must punish all sin, then every sinner must inevitably suffer eternal death; divine justice would require that all men should perish. The alleged transfer of man's punishment to an innocent person is impossible. God's law is, "The soul that sinneth, *it* shall die." The notion of penal substitution, even if it were not inherently absurd, would require that the substitute should suffer eternal death, the ordained penalty of sin, and it is acknowledged that Christ did not suffer this penalty. But even if he had done so, he would have satisfied for but one person, since he could suffer but one eternal death. Moreover, on the orthodox view of his person, he could not suffer at all, since God is impassible. His obedience cannot have been a satisfaction for our sins since he owed obedience to God on his own account; but even if he could have made satisfaction by his obedience, he would have satisfied for but one person. By such considerations Socinus sought to show that forgiveness and satisfaction are incompatible ideas. If God must and does satisfy strict retributive justice by punishing all sin, then there is no logical place or possibility of forgiveness; if, on the contrary, God does forgive the sins of some men, then it is certain that he does *not* strictly punish all sin with the doom of eternal death. If, according to the favorite figure of orthodoxy, Christ has fully paid the debt of the world's sin, then there remains nothing more to be paid; God cannot justly exact its payment again in the punishment of a portion of mankind. But, in point of fact, while our debts may be paid by others, our penalties never can. All examples of "vicarious punishment" presuppose some implication of the victim in the guilt expiated. Again: The satisfaction scheme requires no faith to make it valid, for if it did, then the alleged satisfaction would not be complete.

Taking up the scriptural references to the subject, Socinus points out that the terms "ransom" and "redemption by the blood of Christ" are figures of speech. The statement that Christ died for our sins may mean that our sins were the occasion of his death, or that he died to win us from the commission of sin. He "bore our sins" in the sense that he took them away from us by inciting us to abandon them. The notions of substitution and expiation cannot be legitimately deduced from the sacrificial terms which Christianity borrowed from Judaism, since the Old Testament sacrificial victims were not sin-bearing nor their death substituted for the death of the offerers. If, then, under the Old Testament system, God forgave the sins of men without a satisfaction, he can do so now, and always. Men are required to forgive unconditionally "until seventy times seven times" (Mt. xviii. 21, 22), and cannot God do as much? In the Church doctrine Socinus finds (on its own principles) a double immorality: (1) in letting the guilty go unpunished; and (2) in punishing the innocent.

Our purpose does not require us to discuss these objections to the current orthodoxy, but it is evident from their mere statement that they constitute a formidable challenge. They assail the forensic interpretation of salvation and show to what contradictions and impossibilities it leads when consistently carried out. Socinus borrowed the merciless logic of his opponents and showed to what intolerable results it led. This was legitimate controversy; and yet there was an element of unfairness involved in it. The Reformers' doctrine of atonement was a corollary and support to their doctrine of justification by faith, and, in point of fact, they did not carry out this latter doctrine in a merely forensic way. Justification and imputation were always something more than proceedings in bookkeeping, though the excessive use of juridical analogies often gave them the appearance of being little else. Again: Socinus's view of retributive justice has the same Scotian defect as his opponents' view of grace; it tends to weaken the essential ethical character of God on the side of his rectitude, as the orthodox view tends to weaken it on the side of his love. If the latter view of justice makes it a kind of natural necessity, the former grounds it in an arbitrary freedom. But as against the post-Reformation inconsistency which made justice a kind of natural attribute of God and then (in the method of Scotus) hinged the exercise of mercy upon the operation of the divine will, the position of Socinus, that compassion was as essential in God as retributive justice, was impregnable. But it was on the question of the "punishment of the innocent" that Socinus pressed his opponents hardest. Deserting the conception of Anselm that sin is a violation of private right, on which the defence of their case would have been obviously hopeless, they took up the position that sin is a violation of public law and, as such, must be punished. This is a maxim of criminal procedure. But now if sin is to be remitted, it is obvious that its penalty cannot be inflicted upon the persons of those who committed it, but only upon the head of a substituted victim. The procurement of this victim could only be explained by appeal to the analogies of civil law which allows the substitution of a surety, as where one man pays the debt of another. But this is to fall back again upon the discarded notion of sin as a violation of private right. Thus the defence vacillated between conceptions of private right and public necessity, criminal and civil law, shifting from one ground to another, until, at length, in the persons of its later representatives, it abandoned the effort at rational defence and took refuge in the naked authority of Scripture, and even, in some cases, admitted that justice in God and justice in man must be fundamentally different. We shall see when we come to consider more particularly the penal satisfaction scheme of the seventeenth-century dogmaticians how fond they are of the figure of sin as a debt and atonement as its payment. That figure serves a double purpose: It lends itself to the support of the idea of a precise equivalence between the sufferings of Christ and the penalty due to sin, and it serves to shift the ground of defence from the standpoint of criminal law assumed in the initial definitions, to that of civil law, and so of concealing the real inconsistency in which the argument is involved. The theory deserts Anselm's definitions, but seeks to keep under cover of his arguments. In other words, the necessity of a strict punishment of sin (in criminal law) is first asserted, and then a figurative "punishment" of it (on the analogy of a debt under civil law) is proven to have occurred.

One further remark may be added: The penal satisfaction theory, following in this a suggestion of Anselm, was accustomed to make use of the idea of Christ's infinity as a means of balancing the equation between his sufferings and human guilt. But, as we shall have occasion to see, these mere quantitative relations were more or less clearly felt to be incongruous and inapplicable to such concepts as those of suffering and sin. They could satisfy only the most mechanical, and really superficial, thinking. In so far as they did not satisfy, the alleged equivalence had to be made out by a virtual appeal to what Duns Scotus called *acceptatio*, that is, the gracious acceptance of Christ's sufferings as satisfactory to the mind of God. This was, indeed, deemed a heresy, or a very deficient orthodoxy; yet we find Anselm falling back upon this idea in hinging the satisfaction at last upon God's good pleasure in willing and accepting it, and we shall have occasion to observe how modern representatives of the theory are sometimes constrained to resort to it.[1]

But we must turn without further delay to the exposition of Grotius. His treatise purports to be a defence of the Catholic or Church doctrine against the objections of Faustus Socinus. Grotius accordingly makes free use of the current terminology in which the prevailing theory was expressed. He speaks of Christ "paying" or "suffering the penalty of our sins," "receiving our punishment," and "being chastised, that is, punished." He declares that since death is the ordained punishment of sin, "it can by no means be doubted that with reference to God the suffering and death of Christ had the character of a punishment."[1] He does not hesitate to speak of the blood of Christ as "propitiating God," and says that by his death "God is appeased and reconciled to us."[2] His general definition of the Catholic doctrine is as follows: "God was moved by his own goodness to bestow distinguished blessings upon us. But since our sins, which deserved punishment, were an obstacle to this, he determined that Christ, being willing of his own love toward men, should, by bearing the most severe tortures, and a bloody and ignominious death, pay the penalty for our sins, in order that without prejudice to the exhibition of the divine justice, we might be liberated, upon the intervention of a true faith, from the punishment of eternal death."[3]

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[1] Ritschl shows how, in earlier times, the theory was driven to this cover: "However much, therefore, the orthodox are confident that Christ's penal suffering corresponds to the strictest justice, — in the case of many, such as Amesius and Maresius, the Scotist word *acceptatio* occurs as an indication of an involuntary impression that God, by an act of equity rather than strict justice, must constitute the equivalence, demanded by the premisses, between Christ's satisfaction and the law's demand for punishment." *History*, p. 308.

The *Defence* exhibits that subtlety in analysis, acuteness in rebuttal, and ample learning which we should expect to find in the trained jurist. The argument is fortified by scriptural considerations, by historical examples, and by appeal to the ethical judgments of mankind. But it is noticeable that the principles and practices of heathenism seem quite as acceptable to Grotius as biblical texts, and certainly they often serve the purposes of his theory quite as well. For example, he supports the affirmation "that it is not unjust, or contrary to the nature of punishment, that one should be punished for another's sins" (p. 82) mainly by appeal to heathen ethics, reënforced by some Old Testament incidents. In vain, he declares, does Socinus cite Deut. xxiv. 16: "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sin"; that is a mere positive law which God can repeal as easily as he enacted it; "God is not bound by it." The essence of punishment is infliction on account of sin; "it is not essential that it should be inflicted upon the sinner himself" (p. 88); "nothing prevents that it should be ordained as punishment for another's sin" (p. 89). To establish this Christian principle Grotius introduces a long procession of heathen moralists who have approved it in theory or in practice, — Plutarch, Valerius Maximus, Hesiod, Ulpian, Caius, and a number of other authorities, — Greek, Roman, and Persian. In like manner in chapter x the proof that "God is induced by victims not to punish sin" (p. 192) is derived, in the first instance, from the sacrificial system of the Old Testament and the echoes of it in the New, but is mainly supported by the testimony of a score or more of heathen writers. These are regarded as competent witnesses on the ground that heathen sacrifices were imposed by natural law, as the Jewish system was authorized by specific statute. In this array appear the Canaanites, who "were accustomed to placate Moloch by the slaughter of their own free citizens," and the Tyrians, "among whom it was an ancient custom to immolate to Saturn a free-born youth" (p. 207). These and similar examples "afford no little help in understanding the nature of expiatory sacrifice" (p. 212). Now "sacrifice consists in slaying" (p. 221), and the history of religion, biblical and profane, shows that by the slaughter of victims, animal and human, God is propitiated. "Socinus denies that God is placated by expiatory sacrifices; but the writers above cited by us prove the contrary, inasmuch as they employ the word *placate*[1] to express those sacred rites. Hence arose that phrase employed in the passage quoted from Hebrews, *to expiate sins* (*ἱλάσκεσθαι ἁμαρτίας*), that is, *to atone for sin by placating God*" (p. 218).

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[1] Foster's translation (Andover, 1889), p. 32. The value of this edition is enhanced by a historical introduction and critical notes.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

[3] *Op. cit.*, pp. 1, 2.

These phrases and arguments sound sufficiently orthodox, and such they were doubtless intended to be; yet the keen dogmaticians of the time scented heresy in Grotius, and not without reason. The voice was the voice of Jacob; but the hands were the hands of Esau. The heresy lay partly in what was not said and partly in an unusual use of words. It was apparent to one who read between the lines. Let us note some of the points of divergence from current theory.

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[1] Of course the examples cited of the phrase, *to placate God*, are all from heathen sources, as it is not a biblical phrase. See my *Johannine Theology*, pp. 182–184.

We have seen that Anselm regarded the attitude of God toward sin as that of an offended party whose honor must be vindicated, and that the Reformation theology viewed him as the inexorable avenger who must punish men for the infraction of his law. The view of Grotius differed from both. He conceived God as the supreme Moral Ruler who must maintain the dignity and authority of his government. Socinus, as already remarked, occupied the same position as Anselm regarding the nature of sin, but deduced from the conception an opposite conclusion. Both viewed sin as an offence against private honor and right; Anselm concluded that it was suitable (and so practically necessary) that this honor and right should be satisfied by a reparation; Socinus that it was entirely feasible for God to forgive private injury if he wished. Grotius, on the contrary, viewed sin as a breach of God's public law, a rebellion against his government, which must be maintained and vindicated. The old Protestant theology had transformed Anselm's offended party into an administrator of public criminal law, and by defining retributive justice as the primary attribute of God, had substituted for his *suitable* vindication of the divine honor the absolutely *necessary* plenary punishment of the world's sin. This is the point at which the heresy of Grotius emerges. Not only does he hold love to be the primary attribute of God, but he leaves out of view entirely the whole scheme of equivalence and imputation. Christ's death is the equivalent of our punishment only in the sense that by it the dignity of God's government is as effectively proclaimed and vindicated as it would have been by our punishment. Christ's sufferings are only vice-penal or quasi-penal. With Grotius justice is not "distributive justice," the strict equivalence principle of the post-Reformation orthodoxy; it is "rectoral justice,"[1] regard to the interests of public law and order, by whose maintenance alone the general good can be conserved.

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[1] *Justitia rectoris*, p. 113.

When, now, the law has been broken by sin, it is necessary (if the sinners are to be spared) that the authority of the divine government should be asserted and displayed. But does Grotius's conception of God and of sin permit of a vicarious punishment as the means of accomplishing this end? He frequently speaks of Christ's being punished in our stead, but we must say, with Dr. Foster, that, "strictly speaking, in Grotius's view, he was not punished at all, but his affliction was substituted for our punishment" (p. 260). His sufferings were those of a "penal example" set forth "for the sake of the community," whereby God "testified his own hatred of sin, and so deterred us from it" (p. 108). God's law, ordaining eternal death as the wages of sin, is declared to be "relaxable," though "not easily or upon slight cause," or "without some compensation," lest sin should be lightly regarded (p. 79). Now in ordaining and accepting the death of Christ instead of the death of sinners, God has exhibited both his clemency and his hatred of sin, and by this "singular method of relaxation" has shown us how serious a thing sin is, and has furnished a strong motive to deter us from it. We must conclude that, on Grotius's own principles, he has no right to speak of Christ's being punished in our stead, as he frequently does. Either he used such expressions in a loose and really improper sense or a glaring inconsistency is apparent in his theory. In its underlying principles, his is not a penal satisfaction theory, as Anselm's is not. That distinction belongs (with qualifications) to the Reformers, and (without qualification) to their seventeenth-century successors.

Another question of consistency lies near to hand upon which Dr. Foster has touched in his notes: How is the exegesis of Grotius to be reconciled with his theory? He strenuously insists that it is the uniform scriptural teaching that Christ bore our sins in the sense of suffering their penalty. We must now ask, with Dr. Foster: "Can the punishment of our sins, endured, according to these passages, by Christ as a strict substitute for us, be anything else than the satisfaction of the retributive justice of God? The punishment of our sins, in the strict use of that term, certainly is intended to satisfy the retributive justice of God. If Christ took the punishment of our sins upon himself, as these passages indicate, did he not suffer under the retributive justice of God?" (p. 264). We are concerned with this question only as it bears upon the theory of Grotius. Assuming, as Dr. Foster evidently does, that the exegesis of Grotius is substantially correct, it is certainly no easy task to adjust it to the principles which we have seen to underlie his theory. Dr. Foster himself answers the question by saying that "the Scriptures were not written for philosophical purposes, nor in philosophical language, as is evident upon the slightest examination of them." "We need not expect to find philosophical accuracy" in them — indeed the terms "philosophical accuracy" and "the Scriptures" "express contrary ideas" (pp. 264, 265). But the point of difficulty is that Grotius has seemed to treat their language as "philosophically accurate" and has derived from them a result which seems incongruous with his somewhat peculiar use of terms. The question is whether, if his exegetical and critical assumptions are sound, the orthodoxy of the day could not easily refute his theory by means of his own arguments. I am of opinion that the penal satisfactionists would have a distinct advantage over him in the use alike of his exegesis and of his instructive examples derived from heathen ethics and customs.

But it is necessary to inquire somewhat more minutely into the nature and meaning of that law or government which holds so large a place in the scheme of Grotius. What is its relation to the divine will, or nature? The general impression made by the author's discussion is that he entertains a statutory conception of the law whose demands the death of Christ satisfies. God enacted the law that "every man that sinneth shall bear the punishment of eternal death." But since, in point of fact, some men are saved, it is certain that this law is not in all cases executed, but relaxed. The law is not abrogated, for unbelievers are still exposed to its penalty; but for good and sufficient reasons its execution, in certain cases, is stayed. There are irrelaxable laws, continues Grotius, such as that God cannot lie, or deny himself; but his determination to punish every sin with its full measure of penalty is not of this character. "All positive laws are absolutely relaxable." If in some other way than by the punishment of sin, God maintains his rectoral authority, he may, without inconsistency, remit the penalty of sin. By such a supposition we do not make God mutable. "The law is not something internal within God, or the will of God itself, but only an effect of that will. It is perfectly certain that the effects of the divine will are mutable." It belongs to the very nature of a positive law that the legislator may, under certain circumstances, suspend its operation. To the objection that it is just, and therefore necessary, that sinners should be punished with the full penalty of their sin, Grotius replies, in effect, that it does not follow that because it is just it is necessary. It may be just to do a thing which (even in the circumstances) it is not unjust *not* to do. A man who gives a thousand talents to another is liberal; but he is not necessarily illiberal if he does not give them. That all crime *deserves* punishment is natural and necessary, but it does not follow either in human society or in the divine government that every crime must, under all circumstances, *receive* its full measure of penalty. Nothing prevents the relaxation of penal law. Accordingly, we find that the divine threats of punishment have not always been carried out; on proper conditions, their execution has been withheld, as, for example, in the case of the threats against the Ninevites. The penal law is, then, dispensable. But since by relaxation "the authority of the law seems to be diminished in some respects, it follows that it could not be relaxed easily, or upon slight cause." Now the sufficient reason for the relaxation in question was God's desire that men be saved; for if the penal law were to be rigidly and strictly carried out, the salvation of any would have been absolutely impossible.[1] Applying these principles, Grotius contends that God in his mercy substituted the sufferings of Christ for the punishment of sinners, and by means of this "penal example" more highly honored his law and more effectively warned and deterred men from sin than he could have done by punishing the sinners themselves.

Is the penal law, then, an arbitrary enactment of God? Does he, after all, adopt the view of his opponent, that punitive justice does not reside in God, but is an effect of his will? Does he make justice dependent on the divine will and optional as to its exercise, thus giving it the same character and standing which his Calvinistic contemporaries had assigned to mercy? I think the reply must be that such was not his intention. It must be remembered that he uses the word "justice" in a more comprehensive sense than the advocates of penal satisfaction. God's justice is his rectitude, and that "is an attribute residing in God" (p. 110). God must disapprove and condemn sin; it does not follow that he must punish it. The actual exercise of "punitive justice" is dependent on the divine will. Sin must ever appear blameworthy in God's sight, and his holy nature must ever react against it; but it is not necessary that he should always proceed to inflict the penalty which the sin inherently deserves. If it were, then God would be precluded from exercising mercy at all. Grotius, equally with the Calvinists, grounds justice in the being or essence of God; but he has a different conception of the nature, action, and requirements of justice. To them justice means strict, inexorable, irrelaxable vengeance, so much penalty for so much sin; for him justice means the rectitude or right character of God which he exercises in establishing and administering the moral system. This character of God is immutably just, but the specific ways and means by which he shall conduct his government are dependent upon his will and wisdom. As a ruler he may strictly execute or relax his positive laws, as he wills. It is not unjust for him to will to relax them if, at the same time, he protects his dignity and authority in other ways. Moreover, it is certain that, in point of fact, he has not invariably punished sin, since he has saved and is saving some men, that is, remitting their punishment.

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[1] Ch. iii., *passim*.

We next ask: What view did Grotius take of the divine benevolence and of its relation to justice, whether general or punitive? We must answer that he has not discussed the subject. It must be remembered that the *Defence* is not so much a systematic, constructive treatise as a reply to the arguments of Socinus. Still, this question is so fundamental to his whole contention that we can only regard it as a weakness that he has not taken a more definite position with regard to it. His principles seem, however, clearly to require the view that love is primary in God, but that justice conditions love or determines the method of its exercise toward sinners. At the beginning of his work Grotius writes, "The first cause which moved God (to send his Son) is mercy or love to men" (p. 2). Elsewhere he declares that the fact of God's choosing to remit to us eternal punishment "has its cause in benevolence, which is, of all the attributes of God, most truly peculiar to him. For everywhere (in Scripture) God describes himself chiefly by this attribute, that he is benignant and clement. Therefore, God is inclined to aid and bless men; but he cannot do this while that dreadful and eternal punishment remains. Besides, if eternal death should fall upon all, religion had totally perished through despair of felicity. There were, therefore, great reasons for sparing man" (p. 105). Again, "Among all his attributes love of the human race is preëminent" (p. 107). In this connection he contends that alongside of this clemency exists also the severity of God which conditions the operation of his grace. In order to show that he has no low estimate of sin, and as a means of preventing it, a due regard to the preservation of his government requires that he should set forth Christ as a "distinguished example," who by revealing the ill desert of sin meets the moral ends of penalty.

The discussion of Grotius treats salvation chiefly on its negative side; it is viewed, primarily, as liberation from penalty. It is true that the sufferings of Christ as man's representative are conceived to have a deterrent effect upon the commission of sin; but this aspect of his saving work is evidently regarded as secondary and incidental. Primarily, the sufferings and death of Christ are not part of a *work* of salvation; they belong to a *plan* or *scheme* of salvation; they represent conditions which have to be fulfilled before God is at liberty to save men. All the historic theories of atonement have this feature in common. Their problem is: How can God, consistently with his justice, forgive sin, that is, withhold the penalty which he has ordained for transgression? How can he plan both to express his hatred of sin and to realize his desire to forgive the sinner? Atonement, then, appears as a device whereby forgiveness, that is, suspension of penalty, becomes possible; it is a compromise of some sort between the determination to punish and the desire to forgive. To the mind of Anselm God makes the adjustment by arranging to have his Son suffer and die in deference to his offended dignity; for Grotius God's righteousness was sufficiently asserted by requiring Christ to suffer as man's representative in order to show to the world how strenuous were the requirements of his government; to the minds of the strict constructionists both these schemes were inadequate. In neither case is sin punished, and hence the divine appetite for penalty is not appeased. What is necessary in order to open the way to a possible remission of penalty is not a mere "equivalent homage" to God's honor (Anselm); no amount of homage can ever be equivalent to sin's penalty. Nor is a display of the rectitude of God's government enough (Grotius); this is too vague and general; its "justice" reduces to mere equity, and it does not even profess to maintain a satisfaction which is the strict equivalent of the eternal death of all mankind. There is only one thing which equals punishment, and that is punishment. There can be no satisfaction for sin except a punishment which is the full equivalent of the penalty due to the world's sin. Fundamentally different as these theories are in their content, they are formally alike. They all represent God as devising a way in which he may satisfy his honor, or his law, or his punitive justice, as the case may be, in order that he may then, without self-contradiction, exercise his grace toward sinners — and this device is called "the plan of salvation." Its adoption and execution constitute the logical, if not the chronological, condition precedent of forgiveness. The scheme has, in itself, nothing to do with an actual salvation; it is a process which precedes the real work of saving men; it is wholly outside and independent of their moral life or experience. It should be said, however, that if it is desirable to correlate the satisfaction in any direct way with real salvation from sinning, then the theory of Grotius has an advantage over that of Anselm and the post-Reformation dogma. In these Christ's satisfaction is a payment of back debts; with Grotius it is a deterrent from future offences. "If," he says, "Christ suffered such severities that ye might obtain the pardon of your sins, having indeed obtained it by faith, ye ought to beware of sinning in the future" (p. 16).

The theory of Grotius, though strenuously opposed by the Calvinists, gradually extended itself on the continent and at length attained a widespread influence in both England and America. In Holland, however, his principles were modified in the direction of Socinianism. The later Arminians generally adopted the view that it depends upon the mere will of God whether he shall punish or forgive, and that he, of course, determines at what price he will be satisfied. This position involves a double departure from Grotius; it represents sin as a violation of private right (Anselm), and satisfaction as an *acceptatio* (Duns Scotus).[1] In England the theory, more or less modified, was adopted and advocated within the established Church by Archbishop Tillotson (1630–1694), Bishop Patrick

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[1] To these results the theory was carried by the Arminians — Episcopius (1583–1643), Curcellæus (d. 1659), and Limborch (1633–1712). See Foster's Historical Introduction to the *Defence*, pp. xxi–xxvii.

(1626–1707), Daniel Whitby (1638–1726), and Samuel Clarke (1675–1728). Later it was developed and rendered more precise by the chief theologian of the Wesleyan movement, Richard Watson (1781–1833).[1] It has ever since remained the prevailing type of thought in Arminian theology.

In due time the theory was destined to exert a transforming influence upon the Calvinism of New England. The collected works of Grotius were presented to the library of Yale College by Bishop Berkeley in 1733. The writings of the English Arminians — Daniel Whitby, John Taylor, and Samuel Clarke — were in circulation from about this time. The influence of the Grotian view is seen in Charles Chauncy (1705–1787), Joseph Bellamy (1719–1790), and Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803), while by Jonathan Edwards, Jr. (1745–1801), it was adopted bodily. From this beginning the Grotian principles and method of thought became so general as to be regarded as characteristic of New England theology. The form which the Grotian theory assumed in New England was commonly called the Edwardean, because certain elements of it are found in Jonathan Edwards, Sr., and because it was elaborated by "the Edwardean school," among whom was Jonathan Edwards, Jr.[2] We shall have occasion to touch upon the history and influence of the doctrine, and especially to note its more recent transformations, in the chapter after the next.

It would be easy to point out limitations and defects in the treatise of Grotius. He does not wholly escape the Socinian position which he had set himself to refute; equally with Socinus he denies that penal satisfaction is necessary before sins can be forgiven. He is flagrantly inconsistent in his use of language; he frequently speaks of Christ as being "punished," though his principles exclude such a supposition. Much of his exegesis and many of his illustrations drawn from heathenism prove too much. They are better adapted to prove a strict penal satisfaction than a governmental vindication. The treatise is highly formal and legal in its mode of argument. It reminds one of a lawyer's brief "with its many an 'aforesaid,' 'therefore,' and 'the same.'" It has almost nothing to say of the ethical aspects of salvation. The exposition is a juridical dialectic, portraying a kind of apparatus hanging between heaven and earth. It is difficult to clothe it with the character of reality. In strict logical coherence and consistency it is hardly equal to its Calvinistic rival. Its fundamental assumptions are less definite and uncompromising. Morally it is more tolerable, but taken for what each of the historic theories purported to be — a logical demonstration deduced from definitions made to hand in advance — it is not so clear, precise, or conclusive. Still, its service has been great. It occupied middle ground between Socinianism and Calvinism. It represented a praiseworthy effort to find a point of view more satisfactory than either. It shrank from the conception of God as mere good nature as inadequate, and from the view of him as inexorable vengeance as monstrous. If Grotius was not entirely successful in finding a *via media*, it must be remembered that a middle position is always hardest to define. The extreme position is always easy to state, just because of its one-sidedness ; it requires no qualification or discrimination. The great value of Grotius's work was indirect and remote. He challenged men to new methods of thought and opened the way to the consideration of his problem in new light.

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[1] *Cf.* Foster, pp. xl–xlii.

[2] For an explanation and history of this theory see Professor Park's Introductory Essay prefixed to a volume of discourses and treatises entitled *The Atonement*, edited by him and published in Boston in 1859. This volume contains the exposition of the doctrine by the "younger Edwards" in three sermons.

CHAPTER III

MODERN PENAL SATISFACTION THEORIES

Our next task is to inquire how recent theological thought has related itself to the earlier theories which we have outlined. As has been already intimated, it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate modern writers on the subject into clearly defined classes. The elements of various theories are, not infrequently, combined. Nevertheless, we may distinguish three general types of thought which are sufficiently distinct to warrant separate treatment, and this simple classification will serve us for purposes of illustration. We begin with that mode of explanation which is most closely akin to the views of the Reformers and seventeenth-century dogmaticians, and which ascribes to the sufferings of Christ the character of a penal satisfaction or judicial appeasement of distributive justice. No recent writer has presented this view more clearly and unequivocally than the late Dr. Shedd. The theory is constructed upon certain definitions of the divine attributes, justice and benevolence, and of their relations to each other. By justice is meant the unconditional necessity to punish. By benevolence, or mercy, is meant an emotion of tenderness and pity which it is optional with God to indulge or not to indulge. This justice, moreover, this *quid pro quo* principle in God, is impersonal; it must issue forth in penalty, but not necessarily upon the guilty parties; an innocent substitute may receive the penal stroke. The postulates of the theory are thus expressed by Dr. Shedd: "Retributive justice is necessary in its operation. The claim of the law upon the transgressor for punishment is absolute and indefeasible. The eternal Judge may or may not exercise mercy, but he must exercise justice."[1] Elsewhere he explains that God is capable of two "opposite feelings at the very same moment," namely, wrath and mercy, but that the difference between them is that wrath is constitutive in his being, whereas mercy is voluntary or optional. "The two emotions of which we are speaking are clearly discriminated from each other by the fact that one of them is constitutional and the other is voluntary. The divine wrath issues from the necessary antagonism between the pure essence of the Godhead and moral evil. It is, therefore, natural, organic, necessary, and eternal. The logical idea of the Holy implies it. But the love of benevolence, or the divine compassion, issues from the voluntary disposition of God — from his heart and affections. It is good-*will*."[2] From these definitions the compatibility of the two opposite emotions is deduced. One is located in the "essence," the other in the "disposition" of the Deity.

Strict distributive justice, then, must be exercised. All sin must be punished to the full. But how, in that case, can it be forgiven? Can it be both punished and forgiven? The answer is explicit: It must be punished before it can be forgiven; it must first be punished and then may be pardoned. But can God both eternally punish the sinner and also forgive him? Of course not; if he is to forgive him, he can only punish him vicariously in the person of another. But this is quite feasible, since justice is an impersonal feeling. It will have its vengeance, if not upon the sinners themselves, then upon some one else. Justice compels God to punish, but it does not compel him to punish only the guilty. "Hence," writes Dr. Shedd, "in every instance of transgression, the penalty of law must be inflicted, either personally or vicariously; either upon the transgressor or upon his substitute. The remission of penalty under the divine administration is not absolute, but relative. It may be omitted in respect to the real criminal, but, if so, it must be inflicted upon some one in his place. . . . Justice necessarily demands that sin be punished, but not necessarily in the person of the sinner. Justice may allow of the substitution of one person for another, provided that in the substitution no injustice is done to the rights of any of the parties concerned."[1] "The correlate of guilt is punishment," but not necessarily the punishment of the guilty; the "justice" of God is of such a character that it is equally well satisfied with the punishment of the innocent and sinless, as with that of the guilty. The position, we think, is clear. The innocent is punished with the full measure of the penalty due to the sins of the guilty. Dr. Shedd speaks frequently of Christ as being "vicariously punished."[1]

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[1] *Dogmatic Theology*, II. 436. [2] *Theological Essays*, pp. 270, 271.

We venture to think that the average modern mind is likely to be affected with a certain feeling of incongruity as it contemplates the goal toward which this reasoning is irresistibly leading. Still, it will not be found easy to point out any flaw in the argument, when once the definitions are conceded. The conclusions seem to flow logically from the premisses. We come next to the question, how we are to construe or even endure the idea of a vicarious punishment of Christ, now that we have obtained it by irresistible logic proceeding from axiomatic premisses. The answer is, that it is the prerogative of the Almighty to punish the innocent if he chooses. Cannot he who made the law execute its demands in his own way? What is necessary is simply that the substitute be "accepted by the law and lawgiver. The primal source of law has no power to abolish penalty any more than to abolish law, but it has full power to *substitute* penalty."[3]

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[1] *Dogmatic Theology*, I. 373. [2] *E.g.*, *op. cit.*, I. 375; II. 436.

[3] *Theological Essays*, p. 300. Commenting on this statement the late Dr. E. G. Robinson says: "What this 'primal source,' which he calls 'it,' may be, is not quite so apparent as is desirable in such an argument. It is not very clear what 'power' an abstraction can have to change the sanction of an immutable law. The truth is, that any explanation or defence which can be given of a literal forensic substitution, necessarily involves in the end a contradiction of the idea of absolute justice upon which the whole theory rests; and Dr. Shedd's conception of an absolute justice in God which his voluntary mercy could satisfy or not, shuts us up to the alternative, either of a one-sided nature in God, or of an atonement which is stripped of every vestige of grace. An atonement made necessary to balance the character of God

The next step in the argument is, that this substituted penalty should be "plenary," "a full equivalent for the punishment due to mankind." This view alone "ministers to evangelical repose." The vicarious punishment must be "strictly equivalent," though not "identical"; it need not (and in Christ's case it did not) involve remorse or endless suffering. How, then, could it be equivalent? The answer is that it was "of strictly equal value," as when in paying a loan, one does not return the very coins borrowed, but others of precisely equal worth. That is "literally equivalent payment." Such is the case in question. Christ's penal suffering "contains the element of infinitude, which is the element of value in the case, with even greater precision than the satisfaction of the creature does; because it is the suffering of a strictly infinite Person in a finite time, while the latter is only the suffering of a finite person in an endless, but not strictly infinite time."[1] The conclusion seems to be that the substitutionary punishment was even more than equivalent, since infinite Person plus finite time is held to be greater than finite person plus infinite time. This follows because the factor of personality in the equation is the one of chief value. The debt is more than paid; the account shows a surplus. But in another connection this explanation is given: Every sin is infinitely guilty and requires an infinite satisfaction, that is, the death of an infinite Being. "One sinner needs the whole infinite Christ and his whole sacrifice, because of the infinite guilt of his sin," as much as "a million sinners would."[2] This, says Dr. Shedd, is the "mathematical answer." But I apprehend that some minds will feel a difficulty still. Christ's punishment which is declared to be "mathematically infinite" is exactly equivalent to human guilt, but more than equivalent to what the total eternal punishment of all human sins would amount to, since that punishment would only be the suffering of *finite* persons. It would

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could not be a gratuity to men." *Christian Theology*, p. 260. *Cf.* the remarks on the theory in question in chapter vi., *infra*.

[1] *Theological Essays*, pp. 300, 301.

[2] *Dogmatic Theology*, II. 444.

seem, then, that the penalty ordained by the law against sin could never have been adequate, if inflicted, since Christ's punishment is exactly equivalent to the *guilt* of sin, but more than equivalent to its possible *penalty*.

It will have been observed that this method of reasoning starts with a sharp discrimination between justice and mercy. They are regarded as attributes of entirely different rank and character. They sustain wholly different relations to the divine will and nature. They are often described as acting independently; they are viewed as contrasted, opposite, or even, possibly, antagonistic factors in the character of God. Hence they are frequently referred to as being adjusted or reconciled to each other, or as treating with and making terms with one another. Accordingly Dr. Shedd tells us that in substituting himself (incarnate) for the sinner, "God's own mercy satisfies his own justice for the transgressor."[1] Dr. A. H. Strong has developed his view of atonement from the same premisses, with a logic no less rigorous, but in language less commercial and mathematical. A synopsis of his argument is as follows: "As we may be kind, but must be righteous; so God, in whose image we are made, may be merciful, but must be holy. Mercy is optional with him. . . . Love is an attribute which, like omnipotence, God may exercise, or not exercise, as he will. With holiness it is not so. Holiness must be exercised everywhere. Justice must be done always," etc. This justice, by which is meant retributive righteousness,[2] is defined to be "a principle of God's nature, not only independent of love, but superior to love."[3] "When we think of what holiness is," continues Dr. Strong, "it would indeed at first sight seem to exclude love." One would almost think that in view of the fact that retributive justice is "the fundamental and controlling attribute of God's being," there would be no room for love to sinners. "And yet, wonder of wonders! — he loves the sinner and cannot see him perish. The complex nature of God is strangely capable of these two mighty emotions, — hatred for the sin and love of the sinner; or, to put it more accurately, love for the sinner, as he is a creature of infinite capacities of joy or sorrow, of purity or wickedness, but simultaneous hatred for that same sinner, as he is an enemy to holiness and to God."

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[1] *Dogmatic Theology*, II. 445.

[2] Elsewhere the author defines his terms. Justice and righteousness are "transitive holiness," that is, holiness in exercise toward creatures, the former denoting holiness "chiefly in its mandatory," the latter "chiefly in its punitive aspect." Justice is "distributive or judicial holiness" in which God "reveals chiefly his hatred of sin." This justice "binds God to punish." He "can cease to punish sin only when he ceases to be holy," "Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur." *Systematic Theology*, pp. 138, 139.

[3] It should be noted that this position of Drs. Shedd and Strong is not that of the Reformers, but that of the post-Reformation extrem-

But one naturally asks, how these two antithetic attributes, both of which Dr. Strong regards as "constituent" in the nature of God, can dwell together in harmony. Justice insists upon the punishment of sin; mercy pleads for its pardon. What is to be the outcome? To put question and answer in Dr. Strong's own words: "Triumphant holiness, submissive love — are these, then, in conflict with each other? Is there duality, instead of harmony, in the nature of God? Ah, there would be, but for one fact — the fact of the cross. The first and worst tendency of sin is its tendency to bring discord into the being of God, by setting holiness at war with love, and love at war with holiness. And since both these attributes are exercised toward sinners of the human race,

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ists. Ritschl justly remarks: "The juridical construction of the idea of Christ's satisfaction was originally intended only as a *condition* for the religious and moral certainty of justification in Christ; while the Reformers recognized the providence, or grace, or love of God, as the leading resort of the entire religious consciousness, and his justice, to which satisfaction is required to be given, as the subordinate principle in accordance with which the bestowal of grace through Christ had to be procured. In the theology of the period subsequent to them, this view of the relative value of the two ideas "involuntarily underwent a change." *History*, p. 305. The above-named writers diverge as widely from the doctrine of the Reformers as Dr. Hodge does from that of Anselm (see below). Their definitions accord only with the provincial hyper-orthodoxy of the seventeenth century. They are as unwarranted by historical orthodoxy in general as they are foreign to the Christian concept of God and repugnant to the moral sense of mankind.

the otherwise inevitable antagonism between them is removed only by the atoning death of the God-man. Their opposing claims do not impair the divine blessedness, because the reconciliation exists in the eternal counsels of God; Christ is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."[1]

In accord with these principles it is explained that in virtue of his union with humanity there is "an imputation of our sins to Christ" with all their guilt and penalty. Dr. Strong quotes Melanchthon with approval: "Christ was made sin for us, not only in respect to punishment, but primarily by being chargeable with guilt also," and Thomasius: "Christ bore the guilt of the race by imputation; he sank himself into our guilt." Our author declares: "He took our guilt by taking our nature." "Guilt was not simply *imputed* to Christ, it was *imparted* also"; "Penalty and guilt are correlates; if Christ inherited penalty, it must have been because he inherited guilt." This burden of penalty and guilt "rested upon him from the very beginning of his life." Did Christ, then, have depravity also? No; he was purged from depravity in the womb of the virgin, but guilt and penalty remained. "We may say that Christ takes guilt without depravity, in order that we may have depravity without guilt."[2] In contrast with other theories, Dr. Strong designates this as "the ethical theory of atonement."[3]

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[1] *Philosophy and Religion*, pp. 196–198.

[2] *Systematic Theology*, pp. 412–416, esp. 415.

[3] In a more recent publication (*Christ in Creation and Ethical Monism*, 1899) Dr. Strong has propounded a highly mystical view of Christ's sufferings. Completely identifying Christ with God, he also declares that "he *is* humanity." When God "ordained sin he ordained also an atonement for sin," and he who is the root and substance of humanity must suffer for sin as the body suffers when one of its members is injured (pp. 32–34). Here Christ appears to be conceived as suffering the penalty of sin, not by *substitution*, but by *identification*. He is our "natural life"; "his is the all-including consciousness"; our bodies are manifestations of him, so that in sinful physical indulgences we are "actually crucifying Christ." How this exposition is conceived by the author to stand related to the forensic penal theory elaborated in his *Systematic Theology* I am unable to say; it appears to proceed from entirely different presuppositions and to imply a radically different metaphysics.

If I correctly apprehend this exposition, it is a combination of the following propositions: (1) Both justice and love are constitutive factors in God's character, but the former is a primary, fundamental, and independent, while the latter is a secondary, optional, and dependent, attribute. The former is grounded in the divine essence; the latter is dependent upon the divine will. (2) Accordingly God in his "strangely complex nature" is able both to love and to hate the same object at the same time. (3) Now the simultaneous operation of these "two mighty (but competing) emotions" would have involved the attributes of God in "discord" and actual "war" unless a way had been found to reconcile them. (4) This pacification was accomplished by God's punishing himself in the person of his own eternally holy Son. Thus mercy triumphed, and yet justice was satisfied. There are questions which we should like to raise in connection with this theory, but we are here concerned with explanation, not with criticism. Yet one may properly feel the force of Dr. Shedd's admission that "the extraordinary method" of appeasing justice by "crucifying a person of the Trinity" is "so strange and stupendous that it requires very high testimony and proof to make it credible."[1]

Dr. Charles Hodge has defined the type of doctrine under review with his accustomed clearness and precision. The subject is connected in his view with that series of covenants or contracts by means of which God deals with the human race, and is developed in accord with the idea

It reminds one of the views of Maurice and Dr. Simon and of Dr. Dale's closing chapters. In a still more recent address (at Cleveland, Ohio, May 19, 1904), Dr. Strong acknowledges that we can no longer hold "the old mechanical and arbitrary conceptions of the atonement," and expresses himself thus: "Christ's doing and suffering is not that of one external and foreign to us. He is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, the bearer of our humanity; yes, the very life of the race. The life that he lived in Palestine and the death that he endured on Calvary were the revelation of a union with mankind which antedated the Fall. Being thus joined to us from the beginning, he has suffered in all human sin; in all our affliction he has been afflicted," etc. "So we add to the idea of *substitution* the idea of *sharing*," etc.

[1] *Dogmatic Theology*, II. 447.

of unconditional election. The discussion begins with a definition of terms. The author parts company with Anselm at the start by distinguishing two kinds of satisfaction, — commercial and penal. Commercial satisfaction is simply payment of so much for so much; there is no condescension or mercy or grace involved in it. The satisfaction of Christ is not of this character.[1] Penal satisfaction relates not to debts, but to crimes. Here the demand is upon the *person* of the offender. The essential point is, not how much shall be paid, but "who shall suffer. The soul that sins, it shall die." This definition of terms would seem to leave no place for substitution in the case of crimes or sins, but we are told that it is competent for the sovereign authority or magistrate by a special "covenant" or "agreement" to arrange to have an innocent person punished for a guilty person's crime. It is noticeable that no illustration of this possibility is offered, nor any argument advanced to support it; the punishment of the innocent in the place of the guilty is declared to be feasible if there is a divine covenant or bargain to that effect. Hence penalty is defined as suffering inflicted with a certain design; namely, the satisfaction of justice. The word "penalty" denotes nothing as to the nature of the suffering or as to the person to whom it is due, but only designates the "intention" of the suffering. Punishment is suffering endured for the satisfaction of justice. It is obvious that the definition is so constructed as to leave room for the idea that an innocent person may suffer the punishment of a crime as appropriately as the person who committed it, provided, of course, there is a proper contract to that effect. When in the definition of penalty the fact is left out of view that the penalty of any sin or crime belongs to him who does it, the whole case for the possibility of "vicarious punishment" is obviously assumed.[1]

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[1] And yet, when, later, Dr. Hodge essays to answer the objection that guilt cannot be transferred, he returns to this commercial idea and likens Christ's satisfaction to the payment of a debt. "The transfer of guilt or righteousness, as states of consciousness or forms of moral character, is indeed impossible. But the transfer of guilt as responsibility to justice, and of righteousness as that which satisfies justice, is no more impossible than that *one man should pay the debt of another*. All that the Bible teaches on this subject is that Christ *paid, as a substitute, our debt* to the justice of God" (*op. cit.* II. 540). Here the discarded idea of commercial payment is brought in as a means of parrying the objection.

By vicarious is meant "suffering endured by one person in the stead of another, that is, in his place. . . . When, therefore, it is said that the sufferings of Christ were vicarious, the meaning is that he suffered in the place of sinners."[2] Accordingly, there is nothing vicarious about the sufferings of patriots or martyrs. The word "guilt" is next defined. It has a twofold meaning. Considered as ill desert or demerit, it is "inseparable from sin. It can belong to no one who is not personally a sinner, and it permanently attaches to all who have sinned. It cannot be transferred from one person to another." But guilt has a second meaning: "obligation to satisfy justice. This may be removed by the satisfaction of justice personally or vicariously. It may be transferred from one person to another." This second aspect of guilt is illustrated thus: "When a man steals or commits any other offence to which a specific penalty is attached by the law of the land, if he submit to the penalty, his guilt in this latter sense is removed. Justice demands his exemption from any further punishment. It is in this sense that it is said that the guilt of Adam's sin is imputed to us; that Christ assumed the guilt of our sins; and that his blood cleanses from guilt."[3] The reader will observe that in the case of the criminal used for illustration here, it is not even suggested that justice might be equally well satisfied by some innocent party's enduring his punishment. Yet this was what needed to be shown in order to bridge the chasm between the human analogy and the divine sovereign arrangement. I cannot find that in any instance Dr. Hodge has attempted to show by illustration or argument that justice as understood among men, or administered by human tribunals, would or could be satisfied by substituting innocent persons for guilty ones in punishment. This is a prerogative and peculiarity of the divine justice alone. God only is so just that he can appease his vengeance by punishing the innocent. The authors whose systems we are reviewing, might fitly have concluded their discussions with that confession of theological despair to which one of their seventeenth-century forerunners, Hollaz, was driven when pursuing the same course of argument; namely, that the theory of vicarious punishment rests upon the fact that what would be unjust in men — the punishment of the innocent — is exactly the reverse in God, — a proof of his justice.[1]

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[1] *Cf. Systematic Theology*, II. 470–474. Some of the earlier New England theologians, whose general theory was "governmental," also held similar language. Hopkins, for example, says that Christ "did not suffer that particular kind of pain which is the necessary attendant, or natural consequence, of being a sinner, and which none but the sinner himself can suffer. But this is only a circumstance of the punishment of sin, and not the essence of it." This seems to imply that guilt is not the necessary correlate of punishment. Hence he goes on to say that Christ, though innocent, could perfectly well suffer the whole penalty of sin. *Works*, I. 331.

[2] *Op. cit.*, II. 475.

[3] *Op. cit.*, II. 476.

By Christ's assumption of our guilt and endurance of our punishment "God is propitiated." "Guilt must be visited with punishment," and "it is expiated by satisfaction, that is, by vicarious punishment. God is thereby rendered propitious, that is, it is now consistent with his nature to pardon and bless the sinner." God's "nature demands the punishment of sin; therefore there can be no remission without such punishment, vicarious or personal." These propositions, declares Dr. Hodge, "have been denied only by those who are outside of the Church, and therefore not Christians, or by those who, instead of submitting to the simple word of God, feel constrained to explain its teachings in accordance with their own subjective convictions."[2] It will be noted, however, that Dr. Hodge's historical illustrations of this doctrine of "vicarious punishment" are drawn almost exclusively from the post-Reformation dogmatics. The truth is that his doctrine of satisfaction by punishment was as foreign to Anselm as it was to Grotius. Its appearance in the theology of the Church as a whole is sporadic and exceptional. It is a modern extravagance in belief and statement. But of this, more hereafter.

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[1] See Ritschl, *History*, p. 308.

[2] *Op. cit.*, II. 478, 479.

Having seen what are the definitions on which the theory is constructed, it is needless to follow Dr. Hodge through his more detailed statement and "proof" of the doctrine. The entire result is put into the definitions in advance, and the labor of drawing it out afterward is not difficult. When one is making definitions, it must be his own fault if he does not make them as he wants them. The fact that they may find no analogy or warrant in human life or relations need be no obstacle, since we are dealing here, *ex hypothesi*, not with principles of universal obligation, but with sovereign decrees and inaccessible contracts between persons of the Trinity. The tacit assumptions of this reasoning are that theology is a science which explains the known by means of the unknown, and that the ethics of the divine "covenants" are of so superior an order that the rights and duties which obtain among men are not available to illustrate them.

It is only necessary to note, further, that Christ "paid the debt" of those only whom God in his eternal decree of salvation had chosen to save. Dr. Hodge points out the absurdity of supposing that Christ should die to save those whom God never intended to save; nay, had from eternity "for the manifestation of his glory," as the Confession says, "fore-ordained to everlasting death" (III. iii). The merit of Christ's death is, indeed, sufficient to save them, if God had any intention to do so; but he has not; their fate is sealed in advance. But we are told that the atonement is not wholly without reference even to the non-elect. They are not entirely deprived of "uncovenanted mercies." For example, the death of Christ is "the ground on which salvation is offered" to them, although all possibility of the offer being effective in their case is excluded by their eternal reprobation. Some will feel that this is a rather doubtful benefit. It is the "blessing" which is graciously granted to a starving man when he is permitted to contemplate food of which it is eternally decreed that he shall never taste. There flow from it also, "for all classes of men, innumerable blessings, both providential and religious." What these are is not stated, but they are presumably of the same nature as that already specified; at any rate, the remotest possibility of salvation is not among them.[1]

I have cited the opinions of these three American theologians because they illustrate, better than those of any other three recent writers[2] known to me, the rigid carrying out, though in somewhat differing ways, of the positions of the seventeenth-century dogmatics. In but very few books on the atonement which are fairly recent has the old Protestant traditional theory been preserved without important qualifications. In Germany I do not know of a single prominent living theologian who has championed it in any well-known treatise. It was maintained by Beck, Hengstenberg, Thomasius, and Philippi, but these seem to have been the last of their race.[3] Indeed, the modification of the theory in question by many, and its rejection, root and branch, by others, has been in no small degree due to what Dr. Hodge called an "infection" of German thought, the symptoms of which he discerned and deprecated. At any rate, for better or for worse, this theory is moribund. The three American representatives of it whose views we have just outlined, cannot be paralleled among contemporary British theologians.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, II. 544 *sq.*

[2] Dr. Hodge died in 1878; Dr. Shedd in 1894.

[3] F. A. B. Nitzsch states that Philippi (d. 1882) was the only prominent German theologian who, in recent years, has championed the strictly penal theory. *Dogmatik*, p. 483. Professor Kaftan of Berlin writes me in a private letter: "Eigentlich ist unter den Theologen niemand mehr, der die Lehre von dem stellvertretenden Strafleiden im alten Sinn noch vertritt. Die Theologen aber, die 'positiv' sein wollen und als solche gelten, verneinen die Lehre auch nicht ausdrücklich. Sie deuten sie in irgend einem Sinn um, den zu verstehen schwer und zu behalten noch schwerer ist. . . . Aber, wie gesagt, einen wirklichen Vertreter der alten Lehre giebt es unter den lebenden namhafteren deutschen Theologen nicht mehr." Dean Ménégoz of Paris informs me that among French Protestants the theory has no representatives who have attracted attention by any publications written in its defence. In a later communication, however, Dr. Ménégoz sends me the following extract, illustrating the theory in question, taken from an article in *Le Temoinage*, a religious journal of Paris, and written by Professor E. Vaucher of the Paris Faculty of Theology:—

"Pour qu'il expiât les péchés, il fallait qu'ils devinssent siens, qu'ils prissent possession de lui. Il devait mourir maudit. Et c'est cette invasion du mal dans son être qui constitue la crise terrible de Gethsémané. Il est innocent et il a une conscience de coupable. Il est le fils bien aimé du Père et le Père le renie. Il a lutté contre Satan et Satan s'empare de lui. Il est fait un membre de ce royaume des ténèbres auquel il a apporté la lumière, et la mort qu'il va subir est devenue une mort méritée, la conséquence naturelle, nécessaire de ce qu'il est.

The theory under review was maintained by the late Scotch divines, Dr. George Smeaton [1] and Dr. T. J. Crawford,[2] in their biblical studies of atonement. They did not, however, develop the conception to its logical issues so thoroughly as do the American theologians cited, — perhaps in part because their discussions purport to be purely biblico-theological. Starting with the axiom that the atonement is "a matter of pure revelation," Dr. Smeaton finds the penal satisfaction conception of our Lord's saving mission in all his own sayings and in those of the New Testament writers, which bear upon the subject. "Jesus was visited," he says, "with penal suffering, because he appeared before God only in the guise of our accumulated sin; not therefore as a private individual, but as a representative, sinless in himself, but sin-covered; loved as a Son, but condemned as the sin-bearer, in virtue of that federal union between him and his people, which lay at the foundation of the whole. Thus God condemned sin in the flesh, and in consequence of this there is no condemnation to us." "Infinite guilt renders an infinite

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"Et c'est cette situation, le saint de Dieu envahi par le péché, qui produit la révolution terrible par laquelle Jésus est écrasé dans le jardin. Il marchait vers la croix depuis le début de son ministère ; il était venu pour mourir et il le savait. Mais ici, l'obéissance à la volonté de son Père l'amène à cette situation contre nature d'être séparé de son Père et maudit de lui et c'est là la coupe qui lui cause une indicible horreur."

I am not aware that in America the theory has been maintained in any noteworthy book or treatise since the appearance of the *Systematic Theologies* of Drs. Shedd and Strong.

[1] *The Doctrine of Atonement as taught by Christ Himself* (1868) and *The Doctrine of Atonement as taught by the Apostles* (1870).

[2] *The Doctrine of Holy Scripture respecting the Atonement* (1871).

satisfaction necessary, nay, indispensable."[1] In his Preface (p. vi) he deprecates the tendency to emphasize "spiritual life, divine love, and moral redemption, as contrasted with everything forensic," and characterizes it as "a new phenomenon in theology." Dr. Smeaton makes little effort to justify the penal theory to reason. He regards it as a divinely revealed interpretation of Christ's death, and whether it accords with human reason or not is of small consequence. All we can say is that God was pleased to make Christ our penal representative, as he had made Adam our federal representative in probation. Of both arrangements he says, "To give reasons argues a pretension to knowledge which is not given to us."[2]

Dr. Crawford also holds, with Dr. Hodge, that if there is any satisfaction to justice in Christ's death, it must have lain in the infliction of penalty. Justice is "God's purpose to inflict penalty"; hence justice can be exhibited and satisfied only by "the execution of that penalty." There could be no exhibition of justice which is not an exercise of justice, and it is assumed that justice can be exercised only in punishment.[3] This author declares that "the sufferings of Christ were *penal* in their character, or, in other words, that they were *judicially inflicted* in the execution of a law which denounced punishment on the sins of men."[4] In this connection he refers to Archbishop Magee's "strong scruples as to this mode of characterizing" Christ's sufferings, and while he "cannot help thinking it a groundless scrupulosity which Dr. Magee shows," yet he declares that, "upon the whole, it is to be wished that the word 'punishment' had not been used." One can only wonder why this is to be wished, since, as we have seen, Dr. Crawford elsewhere quotes with approval the assertion of Dr. Hodge that justice can be expressed and satisfied *in no other way than by punishment*. Whether or not we are to discern here a slight shrinking from the logic of the penal theory, I am quite confident that our author betrays a reluctance to assert the strict intrinsic equivalence of Christ's sufferings to the punishment of the world's sin. There is a touch of the *acceptatio gratuita* of Duns Scotus in defining the penal equivalence to mean "simply that these sufferings *were accepted* by the supreme Lawgiver and righteous Moral Governor of the universe as a ground on which he might show mercy to his sinful creatures consistently with the rectitude of his character and the authority of those laws which, as a just God, he is concerned to uphold." Elsewhere he declares, "All that it very much concerns us to be assured of is, that the sufferings of Christ *were deemed sufficient* in the judgment of God to satisfy his justice, to expiate our guilt, and to obtain for us eternal redemption."[1] I submit whether we have not here obvious traces of the Scotian and Arminian heresies of *acceptilatio* and governmental satisfaction.[2] But, in any case, the doctrine of atonement is for our author, as for Dr. Smeaton, "a pure matter of revelation" (Preface, p. v), and, as such, is beyond the ken of reason. "The *principle* or *rationale* of the divine procedure in this matter we may not be able fully to explain." The fact is that God has "*appointed* and *accepted* the sufferings of our Lord as a propitiation"; beyond this "revealed fact" we cannot and do not need to go.[1]

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[1] *Doctrine of the Apostles*, pp. 177, 324.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 159.

[3] *Op. cit.*, pp. 378, 379.

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 183.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 176, 185.

[2] Since writing the above I have found my judgment confirmed by the following words from Principal Simon: "Some parts of Dr. Crawford's exposition are, I think, open to the further criticism that it approaches dangerously near, if not to the governmental theory, yet to that most objectionable of all theories, the *acceptilatio* theory; otherwise, what is the meaning of such words as, '*appointed* and *accepted* by God in place of the very penalty of sin,' especially if he seriously approve, as he seems to do, of Dr. C. Hodge's statement: 'the penalty of the law must be inflicted'? If justice requires the penalty, *i.e.* surely the very penalty; and if another than the very penalty is *appointed* and *accepted* in its place, have we not a case of an artificial, unreal value being put upon and character assigned to something at the good pleasure of him to whom it is offered? And what is this but *acceptilatio?* If Christ's sufferings were not the very penalty, there could be no question of their being 'appointed and accepted' by God 'in place of' the very penalty." *The Redemption of Man*, pp. 22, 23. Dr. Simon points out that the Hodges, also, by hinging the equivalence of Christ's suffering to the penalty of sin upon a decision of the divine wisdom to regard them as having dignity and value enough to answer their purpose, closely approximate "the *acceptilatio* theory, on which both writers pour out the vials of their theological indignation." *Op. cit.*, Appendix, Note III.

No British theologian, so far as I know, has, within recent years, consistently elaborated or defended the theory of vicarious punishment. Among present-day writers, commonly reckoned as conservative, we shall find only approximations to the doctrine or an ambiguous use of some of its terms. Although Dr. R. W. Dale frequently employed the terminology of the penal theory and strenuously supported the proposition that in his homage to "the eternal law of righteousness" Christ "made the consequences of our sin his own," he denied that there was "any imputation of sin" to him, and pronounced such an alleged imputation "a legal fiction."[2] Dr. Dale held that the sufferings of Christ were not punishment, but a substitute for punishment, subserving the same moral ends. "If God does not assert the principle that sin deserves punishment by punishing it, he must assert that principle in some other way."[3] This "other way" is "to endure suffering instead of inflicting it." "It belonged to God to assert, by his own act, that suffering is the just result of sin. He asserts it, not by inflicting suffering on the sinner, but by enduring suffering himself."[4] Dr. Dale also developed the conception of an original and ideal relation of Christ to mankind as its Head and Representative whereby his act becomes ours; but here, too, he denied any "fictitious imputation or technical transfer."[5] It is evident that this theory of satisfaction, in spite of its strong assertion that the death of Christ is the ground of forgiveness, differs widely from the doctrine of vicarious punishment.[6]

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[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 179, 180.

[2] *The Atonement*, the Congregational Union Lecture for 1875. Preface to the seventh edition, p. lxiii.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 391. [4] *Op. cit.*, p. 392. [5] *Cf.* Lect. X, *passim.*

[6] I should say that Dr. Dale's exposition, taken as a whole, resembled that of Grotius more nearly than that of the post-Reformation orthodoxy. It may be added that it resembled the theory of Grotius in its inconsistency, as well as in its principles. But it has strong mystical, as well as governmental, elements. It is acutely criticised by Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*, pp. 382–396. *Cf.* Lidgett, *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*, pp. 155–170.

Whether Professor Orr intends in his Kerr Lectures[1] to give his assent to the penal satisfaction view of Christ's death, I am not able to determine. He speaks of "guilt being removed" by it, and designates it as "the ground on which God forgives sin." He says that "the Scriptures appear to assert a direct relation of the sacrifice of Christ to the sin and guilt of men, — a direct expiatory power to remove that guilt, — a relation not only to God's commanding will, but to his condemning will." He characterizes Dr. J. McLeod Campbell's theory as "artificial and indefensible," because he repudiates the idea of a "vicarious endurance of the penalties of transgression," from which it may be inferred that Dr. Orr entertains this idea. It is further involved in Dr. Campbell's view that Christ "is himself in no sense brought under the experience of the wrath of God, or of its penal effects; it may be thought by many he could not be." Does Dr. Orr hold that he was? Perhaps so, since he adds that "in order that Christ's *Amen* to the judgment of God against sin might have its fullest content, it would appear to be necessary that it should be uttered . . . under the actual pressure of the judgment which that wrath inflicts." Stating his own views, Dr. Orr declares that Christ entered, "so far as a sinless Being could, into the penal evils of our state, and finally submitted to death — the doom which sin has brought on our humanity." "He experienced the full bitterness of these evils" and thus recognized and honored the justice of God and made a satisfaction to righteousness. Christ entered "into the penal evils of our condition"; in what sense, is not explained.[2] I cannot imagine a more cautious statement of the penal theory than this if it is meant to be such. The Scriptures *appear to assert* a relation between Christ's death and guilt; it *appears to be necessary* that Christ should feel the pressure of divine judgment; Christ endured "penal evils," "*so far as* a sinless Being could." How far could he? In what sense were the evils he endured "penal," and in what way did he "experience" them? The theory of vicarious punishment had definite answers to all these questions. I can find none in Dr. Orr's discussion. Of imputation, equivalence, plenary payment, and the like, I find no trace.[1]

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[1] *The Christian View of God and the World*, Lect. VIII.

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 354-365.

Principal D. W. Simon, starting from a kenotic theory of the incarnation and using the conception of Christ as the Head of the organism of humanity, has developed the idea that his sufferings and death were designed to "rectify our relations" with God. Christ "passed through the darkness and pain caused by the divine relation to sin." But Dr. Simon denies *in toto* that Christ bore the penalty of the law in man's stead. He interprets the saving work of Christ from the standpoint of the incarnation; in virtue of his union with our race Christ becomes the Mediator between God and man. "As human sin passed through Christ to God, so the divine action toward sin passed through Christ to man."[2] There is a strong mystical vein in this exposition. In the crucifixion "the life of humanity, entering him subconsciously, must have been most completely laden with sin and with the fear of death, which is its fruit, at the very moment when he himself was enduring death in its most terrible form."[3] Dr. Simon has strongly emphasized the divine wrath against sin and the "objective" aspect of reconciliation, but, like Dr. Dale, he utterly repudiates the idea of a penal equivalence of the sufferings of Christ to the punishment due to sin.

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[1] The breach between Dr. Orr and the old Protestant theory of atonement is most apparent in this passage: "If I might indicate in a word what I take to be the tendency of the modern treatment of the atonement, I would say that it consists in the endeavour to give a spiritual interpretation to the great fact which lies at the heart of our redemption, — not necessarily to deny its judicial aspect, for that, I take it, will be found impossible, — but to remove from it the hard, legal aspect it is apt to assume when treated as a purely external fact, without regard to its inner, spiritual content; and, further, to bring it into harmony with the spiritual laws and analogies which obtain in other spheres." *Op. cit.*, p. 341. I infer that Dr. Orr sympathizes with this "tendency," the description of which strikingly suggests that "new phenomenon in theology," the special emphasis upon "moral redemption," which Dr. Smeaton so greatly deprecated.

[2] *The Redemption of Man*, p. 323.

[3] *Reconciliation by Incarnation*, p. 366.

A closer approximation to the penal theory is found in Dr. D. W. Forrest's Kerr Lectures.[1] Dr. Forrest says that Christ "died a death which in a sense he made his own," but on the next page tells us that "it is not possible to imagine" that this death was "the death of sinners with the sting of sin in it," and adds: "To say that he died our death is a permissible expression, but it is not scriptural; and it may fatally mislead. The death which is due to the sinner is abiding separation from God. That death he did not die, but averted from us. To attempt to find in his death for us some exact equivalent to the condemnation from which he redeems the sinner, is to de-spiritualize his sacrifice." But were Christ's sufferings penal? Did Christ vicariously bear the punishment of the world's sin? Dr. Forrest seems to say so. "By his voluntary identification of himself with sinners, . . . he suffered as their representative the penalty of God's displeasure at human sin, and acknowledged it to be just." He was really conscious "of the condemnation of God resting upon him as its (humanity's) representative." Some have argued, continues Dr. Forrest, that this consciousness of Christ "was only the vivid mental realization of God's wrath against sin to which he inwardly responded, not the actual experience of it." But our author holds that he actually experienced the divine wrath as resting upon him in his representative character. "It was the experience of the divine displeasure toward a race of which he had freely chosen to become one." But did not this suffering with and for sinful man arise from sympathy? Dr. Forrest admits that a sympathy like that of Christ was, indeed, no mere "sentimental feeling." But "there is more than sympathy — there is a oneness of life with men . . . which has no parallel in human experience."[2] Now, while terms like "suffering penalty" and "experiencing wrath" seem consistent only with the penal theory and are certainly borrowed from it, yet we find Dr. Forrest suggesting that we had better beware of such an expression as "Christ's dying our death," and denying entirely the doctrine of an equivalence between our Lord's sufferings and the penalty due to sin. How Christ suffered the penalty of sin, was conscious of God's condemnation resting upon him and actually experienced his wrath, and yet did not suffer the full equivalent of sin's condemnation, is a fair question. It is sufficient for our purpose to note that the penal satisfaction theory affirms this last proposition, while Dr. Forrest denies it.

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[1] *The Christ of History and of Experience*, Lect. VI.

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 238, 239.

In Professor Denney's *Studies in Theology* we are told that "Christ deals with God's condemnation on man in a great and serious way." "He puts it away by bearing it. He removes it from us by taking it upon himself." "God forgives our sins because Christ died for them"; "our condemnation came upon him"; "God's condemnation of sin fell upon him"; "he died that death of ours which is the wages of sin"; "in his death a divine sentence was executed upon the sin of the world"; "God lays the sentence for sin on his Son," who "dies the sinner's death." Dr. Denney quotes approvingly the hymn, "In my place condemned he stood; Hallelujah." "As Dr. Dale has put it," he continues, "Christ did not come to preach the gospel; he came that there might be a gospel to preach."[1] "The cross is the place at which the sinless One dies the death of the sinful; the place at which God's condemnation is borne by the Innocent." He rejoices in the word "substitution." "We have no standing in grace but that which he has won for us; nothing but the forfeiting of his free life has freed our forfeited lives. That is what is meant by calling Christ our substitute." One great advantage of this view, continues our author, is that "it can be preached." It is the "barb" which you must have "on your hook" if you would catch men.

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[1] The passage to which allusion is here made is, I suppose, the following: "The real truth is that while *he came to preach the gospel*, his *chief object* in coming was that there might be a gospel to preach" (italics mine), *The Atonement*, p. 46. It will be seen how differently Dr. Dale and Dr. Denney have "put it"; but this is by the way.

All views but this appear to be regarded as a compound of theological Socinianism and ethical Antinomianism, "annihilating the moral order of the world altogether." Other views make the mercy of God "accessible apart from Christ," teach that "God does not need to be propitiated," and so "subvert all moral distinctions"; whereas "the whole meaning, contents, substance, and spirit of the expression 'God is love' are contained in propitiation, and in nothing else."[1]

The later work of Dr. Denney, *The Death of Christ*, is biblico-theological in form, and is devoted to the maintenance of propositions like the foregoing by means of exegetical arguments. The idea of a substitutionary death whereby God is propitiated is found by this author in almost all passages which refer in any way to Christ's suffering or dying, and is shown to be logically involved whether expressed or not. He is especially fond of the formula, "He died our death," which Dr. Forrest thinks only "permissible," as it is "not scriptural" and "may fatally mislead." Both books picture a God estranged from man by reason of sin. The world lies helpless and hopeless under the Almighty's frown and curse. Sin, guilt, punishment, — these are the dominant notes of Dr. Denney's theology. Of divine love we know and can know nothing save as it is discerned in and through propitiation. The question of God's character is not further considered. The moral aspects of the work of Christ are regarded as entirely secondary and dependent upon his external propitiation for sin "outside of us"; they have no place and no meaning until Christ by his death in our stead lifts the burden of guilt which was crushing us to perdition. Toward all mystical modes of viewing our subject Dr. Denney displays an undisguised repugnance. We seem, at length, to have found a theologian whose opinions betray no sympathy with Dr. Smeaton's dreaded "new phenomenon in theology."

Until lately I had supposed that all the foregoing statements had been meant in the sense of a strict penal satisfaction, but in the author's more recent work entitled, *The Atonement and the Modern Mind*,[1] a somewhat different impression is conveyed. Dr. Denney expresses surprise that his earlier views should have been regarded as "legal," "juridical," and "forensic," and repudiates these terms as inapplicable to them.[2] Here the atonement appears as "a demonstration of love made at infinite cost," a "demonstration of love," — as "the modern mind" contends, — "powerful enough to evoke penitence and faith in man" (p. 121). Again, it is "a demonstration of God's self-consistency" and means "that God maintains inviolate the moral constitution of the world, taking sin as all that it is in the very process through which he mediates his forgiveness to men." We are now told that "God's righteousness includes his grace," and that "it is through Christ, and specifically through his death, that we get the knowledge of God's character which evokes penitence and faith and brings the assurance of his pardon to the heart" (p. 145). Since it is, in part at least, an assurance of God's character which is given in Christ's death, it is evident that his teaching and life must contribute to it.

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[1] *Studies in Theology*, pp. 100–132, *passim.*

Much of the language of the earlier books may, indeed, be duplicated here. Physical dissolution is held to be due to sin; death and sin are "parts or aspects of the same thing" (p. 93). Hence Christ's death is a substitute for ours. "Death was our due, and because it was ours he made it his." Christ's giving of his life means the experience of dying, and there is still the same sharp separation made between his work done outside of us and its subsequent action upon and in us. Still, I am quite mistaken if either the tone of this more recent discussion, or the proportions of the interpretation advanced, are the same as those of the earlier books. The terms seem more hospitable, as when we are told that one is to be reckoned as "evangelical" if he "believes that God forgives only in a way that shows him to be irreconcilable to evil, and can never treat it as other or less than it is" (p. 114). This, certainly, is a sufficiently roomy definition. I fancy also that I discern here a fuller recognition of the divine love and a stronger inclination to find a point of contact between the work of Christ and the inner life of man, — or, in Dr. Orr's words, to seek the "spiritual content" of Christ's salvation. Had I not read these more recent utterances of Professor Denney, I should have classed him with the uncompromising advocates of the post-Reformation dogma, where (in common with many others) I had supposed, from the study of his previous books, that he belonged. In view of this recent discussion, however, I must question his right to a place among the few remaining representatives of the theory of vicarious punishment. I hope that in passing this judgment I am doing him no injustice.[1] I may add that I find confirmation of the opinions just expressed in a review of Dr. Denney's last book by Dr. B. B. Warfield,[2] who asserts that Dr. Denney's exposition "proceeds upon an essentially rationalistic basis," and accords to the Scriptures "no real authority," whereas, in Dr. Warfield's view, the only basis for a valid theory seems to be regarded as the "bare authority" of Scripture. I do not, of course, mean to intimate that I share Dr. Warfield's estimate of Dr. Denney's departures from orthodoxy.

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[1] First published as a series of articles in *The Expositor*, August–October, 1903, and now issued in a volume (1903).

[2] "There is nothing which I should wish to reprobate more wholeheartedly than the conception which is expressed by these words." *Op. cit.*, p. 69.

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[1] A development of German theological thought closely resembling that which has been traced in this chapter is illustrated in his review of recent discussions by F. A. B. Nitzsch, *Dogmatik*, pp. 483–487. Philippi was the last representative of the old orthodoxy. It is then shown how his position was modified by Thomasius, Gess, Kähler, Frank, and Häring, in some cases in the direction of Arminian governmentalism, by others on the lines pursued by Rothe, McLeod Campbell, *et al.* (see *infra*), but, in all cases, in the direction of a more distinctly ethical interpretation. Dean Ménégoz writes me that in France "tous nos professeurs ont plus ou moins attenué la vieille conception orthodoxe."

[2] *Princeton Theological Review*, October, 1904.

CHAPTER IV

MODERN ETHICAL SATISFACTION OR ETHICIZED GOVERNMENTAL THEORIES

THE definitions of atonement which we have just noticed are more or less vague on the points of difference between the penal and the governmental theory. Christ is said to have endured the wrath of God, to have suffered in our stead, to have died our death, or, again, to have vindicated and satisfied the eternal law of righteousness. This seems to be the language of a strict penal satisfaction theory, and yet one will search in vain in these writers for the precise premisses of that theory. The discussions and definitions of the divine attributes by which writers like Drs. Shedd and Strong justify and, indeed, compel the conclusion that Christ suffered the full penalty of the world's sin, are wanting in the treatises last reviewed. It is possible that, despite their use of penal phraseology, their authors would have been more properly ranged among the successors of Grotius than among those of Calvin and Turretin. Certainly they do not use the language adapted to describe vicarious punishment more freely and emphatically than Grotius himself did ; yet we have seen that his conception of God and his definitions of law and justice make it absolutely impossible to take his language in its strict and proper meaning. We imagine that the same holds true of that series of writers, from Dr. Dale onward, whose guarded and sometimes equivocal statements we have had occasion to quote. In any case, one thing is clear : Almost all modern evangelical writers, whatever their particular shade of opinion, are disposed to qualify and tone down the definitions and formulas of the old theology, even where they employ some of its terms; they seldom glory in the claim, as earlier writers did, that theirs is the "legal" and "forensic" interpretation of the work of Christ, or assert that the determination to punish is the primary element in the Christian concept of God, which he must gratify in the sufferings of Christ before he can forgive. Most moderns share the conviction of Grotius that there is no attribute more "truly peculiar" to God than benevolence.

But while the views of Grotius afforded relief from the positive immoralities which were defended under the scheme of the plenary punishment of the innocent, it has been commonly felt to possess a certain artificiality. It posited a kind of apparatus of government — a sort of *mécanique céleste* — which was described as intervening between God and man and conditioning their relations. It has been seen that the real problem is: How is the work of Christ related to the *ethical nature* of God? Hence the tendency of recent thought has been to ethicize the conception of satisfaction. Not to meet the supposed exigencies of a moral system, but to reveal God, to express and satisfy God himself in all his glorious perfections, is the "objective" aim of the work of Christ. In the present chapter I desire to give some illustrations of this tendency of thought; hence I have entitled it, Modern *Ethical* Satisfaction Theories, or Ethicized Governmentalism.

We may appropriately begin with a thinker who took up into his thought the elements of various theories and whose suggestive treatment had the effect to stimulate reflection and to open the way to important modifications of the views current in his time; I refer to Jonathan Edwards, Sr. There is a genuine Anselmic note in Edwards's repeated assertion that the satisfaction must be fully equivalent to the sin for which it compensates. "It is requisite that God should punish all sin with infinite punishment; because all sin, as it is against God, is infinitely heinous, and has infinite demerit, is justly infinitely hateful to him, and so stirs up infinite abhorrence and indignation in him. Therefore, it is requisite that God should punish it, unless there be something in some measure to balance this desert; either some answerable repentance or sorrow for it, or other compensation."[1] What is the ground of this necessity? The answer given is that of Anselm, not that of the post-Reformation theology: It is *fit* or *suitable*, that God should require such a satisfaction. This assertion occurs more than thirty times in this dissertation of less than thirty pages. We find also Grotian elements: "God is to be considered, in this affair, as the Supreme Regulator and Rector of the universe," who must "maintain the rights of the whole" and vindicate his "rectoral justice."[2] Although there are isolated phrases in this essay which suggest penal satisfaction, it is clear to me that this was not Edwards's theory. When he comes to define the relation of Christ to sinful men, his illustration is drawn, not from commercial or criminal analogies, but from the civil and personal relations of a patron to the clients whose case he undertakes. Christ, indeed, "suffered the wrath of God," but only "in such a way as he was capable of," and this "way" was twofold: (1) He had a clear sight of the wrath and punishment which sin deserved, and (2) he endured the *effects* of that wrath; he suffered *as if* he had been the object of it. It is noticeable that Edwards does not ground his exposition on the definition of retributive justice as the primary attribute of God; but neither does he explicitly apply to the subject his own principle, elsewhere elaborated, of universal benevolence. In its warp and woof his essay is a combination of Anselmic and Grotian principles. In so far as it has points of contact with the theory of vicarious punishment, it displays the inconsistency inherent in that theory; namely, that of laying its foundation in criminal law and then proving its case by appeal to civil relations.

There are two or three suggestions in the Essay which should be noticed because of their fruitfulness in the thought of others. One is that sin must be satisfied for either by an equivalent sorrow and repentance, or some other compensation. The former possibility Edwards regarded as excluded, in point of fact, since he assumed, as self-evident, that repentance was possible only to those who have sinned, and held that all their penitence "is as nothing in comparison with the injury" done by sin. Still, the fact that he several times mentions this possibility may indicate that it was to his mind, at least, abstractly conceivable. It was from this possibility, regarded as actual, that Dr. J. McLeod Campbell developed his theory of an adequate sorrow and repentance for sin offered by Christ on man's behalf. The second suggestion of Edwards which I would note is that in Christ's experience of suffering with and for sinners, accompanied, as it was, by an intense sense of the odiousness of sin, there was "an increase of the holiness of his nature"; the bringing forth of the fruits of holiness "tended to strengthen and increase the root." By this application of the idea that Christ was perfected through suffering (Heb. ii. 10), Edwards suggests the view which Rothe developed, that Christ qualified himself by his experience to be the Redeemer. The third suggestion is contained in a strongly ethical description of the way in which Christ, out of love and pity, undertakes our case and becomes our substitute through sympathetic identification. I quote only the closing words: "A very strong and lively love and pity toward the miserable tends to make their case ours; as in other respects, so in this in particular, as it doth in our idea place us in their stead, under their misery, with a most lively, feeling sense of that misery, as it were feeling it for them, actually suffering it in their stead by strong sympathy."[1] It is evident that Edwards did not share the estimate of those whose test of insufficient ideas of substitution is that it is based in "mere sympathy."

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[1] Essay on *Satisfaction for Sin* in the New York ed. of Edwards's works (1864), Vol. I. p. 583.

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 586, 587.

Want of space forbids our tracing out the development of the distinctions and principles of Grotius in New England theology. They were elaborated by Joseph Bellamy (1719–1790), Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803), John Smalley (1734–1820), Stephen West (1735–1819), Jonathan Edwards, Jr. (1745–1801), Nathaniel Emmons (1745–1840), and others. Only the briefest summary of the principles of the Edwardean school can be given, and that can best be done in the words of Professor Park: "(1) Our Lord suffered pains which were substituted for the penalty of the law, and may be called punishment in the more general sense of that word, but were not, strictly and literally, the penalty which the law had threatened. (2) The sufferings of our Lord satisfied the general justice of God, but did not satisfy his distributive justice. (3) The humiliation, pains, and death of our Redeemer were equivalent in meaning to the punishment threatened in the moral law, and thus they satisfied him who is determined to maintain the honor of this law, but they did not satisfy the demands of this law itself for our punishment. (4) The active obedience, viewed as the holiness, of Christ was honorable to the law, but was not a work of supererogation, performed by our substitute, and then transferred and imputed to us, so as to satisfy the requisitions of the law for our own active obedience. (5) The law and the distributive justice of God, although honored by the life and death of Christ, will yet eternally demand the punishment of every one who has sinned. (6) The atonement rendered it consistent and desirable for God to save all who exercise evangelical faith, yet it did not render it obligatory on him, in distributive justice, to save them. (7) The atonement was designed for the welfare of all men; to make the eternal salvation of all men possible; to remove all the obstacles which the honor of the law and of distributive justice presented against the salvation of the non-elect as well as the elect. (8) The atonement does not constitute the reason why some men are regenerated, and others not, but this reason is found only in the sovereign, electing will of God. 'Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.' (9) The atonement is *useful* on men's account, and in order to furnish new motives to holiness, but it is *necessary* on God's account, and in order to *enable* him, as a consistent Ruler, to pardon *any*, even the smallest sin, and therefore to bestow on sinners any, even the smallest, favor."[1] It was common for the members of this school to distinguish three senses of the word "justice": (1) commutative justice, which has reference to property and the payment of debts; (2) distributive justice, which relates to the punishment of crimes; and (3) general, public, or rectoral justice, by which is meant God's goodness in general, his regard for the good of the universe. Not in the first two senses, but only in the third, is justice satisfied by the death of Christ. "This is done by the death of Christ, which supports the authority of the law, and renders it consistent with the glory of God and the good of the whole system, to pardon the sinner."[2]

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[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 604, 605.

We will next illustrate the more recent applications of this general conception. Dr. Samuel Harris presents a governmental view of atonement, ethically interpreted. He declares that the universal religion "must satisfy the demands of the sinner's own reason and conscience, in his consciousness of deserving God's displeasure, by presenting God's revelation of himself as redeeming men from sin in such a way that in the very act of seeking the sinner to save him from his sin, he asserts and maintains the law, manifests his compassion and mercy in harmony with righteousness, and makes atonement for the sinner while forgiving him."[3] Applying this general principle to the work of Christ, Dr. Harris says: "He, in his humiliation and in all his earthly life, obeyed the law of love in perfect self-renunciation through sufferings unspeakable, and even unto death on the cross, to bring men back to reconciliation with God. Thus he revealed the law of love more fully than it had ever been revealed before, and fully asserted and maintained the righteousness of God and the universal obligation and inviolable authority of the law of love at every step in the redemption of men and in the forgiveness of sin. And thus he made atonement for sin and guilt."[1] But Dr. Harris insists that this work of Christ is according to God's nature and method and is grounded in principles universally valid and applicable: There is no "introduction of any new principle into the action of God and his revelation of himself therein. It is simply the revelation, in its highest form in Christ, of the divine love as good-will or benevolence, and also as righteousness in conforming with law and maintaining its authority, which appear in all God's revelation of himself in his moral government of rational persons."[2] These are rather formal statements, but at least these four notes, not prominent in the "historic theories," are heard in them: (1) Christ's sufferings and death are regarded as of a piece with his life-work in general;[3] (2) the atonement is conceived as one with all God's revealing and saving work in history; (3) the law which is satisfied by Christ is the law of love, alike in its benevolent and in its righteous aspect, and (4) God is satisfied not by being acted upon, appeased or propitiated, but by acting out his nature in holy love and sacrifice, by expressing and realizing in humanity his own moral perfections. As compared with that of Anselm, Hodge, or even Grotius, this is a new world. It is a world of moral reality instead of one of mathematical equivalences, legal fictions, and governmental exigencies.

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[1] *Introductory Essay*, pp. x, xi.

[2] Jonathan Edwards, Jr., *The Atonement*, ed. by E. A. Park, p. 38.

[3] *God the Creator and Lord of All*, II. 380.

Professor Lewis F. Stearns has expounded our subject in the method and spirit of Grotius, to whom, as we have seen, substitution meant, not a substitution of Christ's punishment for the sinner's punishment, but the substitution of his sufferings for punishment. God, says Dr. Stearns, is holy love and in the work of saving men he must safeguard his righteousness, or self-respect, as well as express his benevolence. This was done through Christ's entering into the keenest realization of the nature and effects of sin. "In so far as he shared in those corporate evils which are a divine punishment of sin, a kind of objectivized divine displeasure, he felt himself under punishment."[1] In his union with sinners it was *as if* God's displeasure rested upon him. "He put himself, so far as was possible for a sinless One, into the sinner's place, where he could realize the greatness of human sin and of the divine displeasure which visits sin with punishment."[2] In the view of Dr. Stearns death in itself has no atoning power, nor is the dignity of Christ's person to be regarded as giving to his death a value or weight by which it is made to balance the debt or quantity of the world's sin. Atonement is in its essence moral and spiritual. The saving value of Christ's death lay in its spirit and purpose. The "reparation" consisted in the laying of his will as a holy offering on the divine altar. But how did this obedience and self-surrender stand related to that vindication of divine righteousness which was required? Dr. Stearns replies that in this self-surrender Christ "acknowledged the divine justice in the punishment of sin and sought the divine forgiveness," that Christ "endured the death which is the common doom, and by so doing rendered to God the spiritual reparation which was due from man, and without which God could not justify and forgive the sinner."[3] But Christ was not punished. "He took upon him that consequence of sin which to others is punishment." "We speak of his vicarious death, but the vicariousness lay rather in the spiritual sacrifice to God, of which the death was the vehicle and expression, than in the death itself. He was not our Substitute in punishment, but our Substitute in atonement."[4]

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[1] *Op. cit.*, II. 345.

[2] *Op. cit.*, II. 373, 374.

[3] Earlier writers frequently represented the atoning work of Christ as consisting "wholly in his suffering unto death." So Hopkins, *Works*, I. 328.

These statements will, I think, strike most readers as somewhat formal in their character. There is little, if any, effort made to show how the Christ whom we know in history and in experience really and concretely accomplished for us the reparation described. But, perhaps, one should not look for this in a brief and theoretic statement.

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[1] *Present-Day Theology*, p. 391.
[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 393.
[3] *Op. cit.*, pp. 393, 394.
[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 394.

The elements of which the theory is composed are obvious enough. It repudiates all ideas of vicarious punishment, of an imputation of guilt to Christ, and of an equation between his sufferings and our penalty. It thus rejects the post-Reformation dogma and departs from the equivalence-schemes of Anselm and of Edwards. Its positive features are : the saving value of Christ's death not to be found in the death itself, but in certain moral and spiritual acts and qualities lying behind the experience of dying; an acute realization of the hatefulness of sin whereby its guilt was acknowledged, and a consequent experience of the corporate evils which flow from sin and which for sinners have the character of punishment. Here we note an echo of what Edwards called a "strong and lively love and pity toward the miserable," and in the "acknowledgment" of the evil of sin and the "seeking of the divine forgiveness" an approximation to Dr. Campbell's idea of a vicarious repentance or expiatory confession. But how this experience of Christ should remove the obstacle to forgiveness and open the way to an exercise of grace which was impossible before, is not so clear. On the assumption (which Dr. Stearns shares) that God's grace was impeded by his righteousness, of which some assertion must be made before grace could operate, the penal view is clearer at this crucial point. There what needed to be done in view of sin *was done;* here it was *as if* it were done ; something else was done which is declared to answer equally well. But in so far as the same assumptions are common to both theories, it is incumbent on the governmental theory to show that this substitute for penalty *does really* meet its ends — that something which is not punishment is equally as good as punishment for its purpose. I venture to think that here is the point where the burden of proof presses hardest upon theories like that of Dr. Stearns ; it is at this point that the case is made out by an "as if" or "as it were." I suggest the question whether a theory like that under review can successfully retain, in its premisses, so much common ground with the penal view without a nearer approach to its conclusion ;

in other words, whether the modern governmental interpretation can successfully parry the arguments for vicarious punishment without a more thorough revision of its own presuppositions. But this is by the way.

In the essay on atonement in the volume entitled *Progressive Orthodoxy*, President George Harris has given an interpretation of Christ's mediation which seeks to do justice to both its subjective and its objective factors. In discussing the relation of Christ to the forgiveness of sins, he contends that men have not the power or inclination to repent apart from the revelation of God in Christ. He then develops the conception of Christ's identification of himself with us in virtue of which he brings men to his own estimate and feeling concerning sin. "The race of men with Christ in it is essentially different in fact, and therefore in the sight of God, from the same race without Christ in it." "The race may be conceived as approaching God, and signifying its penitence by pointing to Christ, and by giving expression in him to repentance which no words could utter." "He is the Amen of humanity to the righteousness of God's law, to the ill desert of sin, to the justice of God's judgments." "Christ's suffering and sympathizing with men is able to awaken in them and express for them a real repentance." "In union with Christ man adopts the feeling of Christ concerning sin against the God of love." "Christ's sacrifice avails with God because it is adapted to bring man to repentance." Substitution means, "the race with Christ in it substituted for the race without Christ in it" (pp. 52–56). It will be noticed that these expressions bear a general resemblance to those of Dr. McLeod Campbell.

If, now, we approach the subject from the divine side, we see "that the sufferings and death of his only Son realize God's hatred of sin and the righteous authority of the law; therefore punishment need not be exacted." God can never be "indifferent to sin in saving man from punishment." But we gain the full meaning of this truth only when we "go on to the fact that Christ makes real very much more than God's righteous indignation against sin." That would not be enough; a mere manifestation of indignation against sin could no more save men than punishment could save them. We must see that "the wrath of God is only a manifestation of the love of God, since God cannot allow the sinner to be blessed in his sin." "In Christ God can come to man in another relation, because Christ is a new divine power in the race to turn it away from sin unto God." What, asks Dr. Harris, is the greatest punishment of sin? Is it not separation from God? Does not Christ, then, avert the penalty of sin when he so brings the knowledge and love of God to men that it is no longer necessary that they should suffer all the consequences of sin? "The ethical ends of punishment are more than realized in the pain and death of the Redeemer, through whom man is brought to repentance." "Except for Christ God could only punish sinners by withdrawing himself more and more from them; but in Christ their repentance and renewal become possible, and God can bring them to their true destination. The race is other to God than it could be without Christ, and God is other to the race than he could be without Christ. That is, Christ is the Mediator between God and man." "But the work originates with God. It is therefore the final fact that God is reconciled to man, and therefore man is reconciled to God." Hence it is "on account of Christ that God can forgive, on account of Christ that men are not left helpless and condemned under the necessities of unchangeable law." "The sacrifice of Christ is thus an indispensable condition of the forgiveness of sin" (pp. 57–62). Perhaps one might summarize this view by saying that God satisfies himself in that approach which he makes to man in Christ whereby his holy love is most fully revealed, and whereby sinful man is drawn into fellowship of life with himself. The theory obviously discards all notions of vicarious punishment, imputation, and equivalence, and avoids such conceptions as that of homage to law or government. It construes atonement as a method of mediation between the personal God and sinful man. The method is determined by the nature of God as holy love and by the end sought — the bringing of man into the life of holy love. Nothing else but the accomplishment of his holy and gracious purpose in bringing man into fellowship with himself could ever "satisfy" God.

We turn next to a series of British writers of various schools, arranging them not in chronological order, but with general reference to the degree of their departure, in their language at least, from the older definitions of satisfaction. We begin with the late Bishop Arthur Lyttelton, the author of the essay on Atonement in *Lux Mundi*. The sacrifice of Christ is held to have been both a propitiation and a satisfaction. In what sense? Answer: Christ's death "became a propitiation in that he, the self-chosen victim, by his acceptance of it, recognized the righteousness of the law which was vindicated on the cross" (p. 290). What gave his death "propitiatory value" was his "perfect obedience," his "spirit of sacrifice." Bishop Lyttelton holds that not physical but spiritual death — "the consciousness of separation from the life of God" — is the penalty of sin, therefore it was necessary for Christ as man's substitute to experience, in addition to the tortures of the cross, "the withdrawal of God's presence." This author also lays stress upon the idea that Christ was our representative, and declares that "the atonement did not consist in the substitution of his punishment for ours, but in his offering the sacrifice which man had neither purity nor power to offer" (p., 298). "The beginning and the end of the atonement is the love of God; the death of Christ was not the cause, but the revelation of that love" (p. 307). The author holds that "our Lord did endure the very sufferings which are, in sinners, the penalties of sin"; but he denies that these are properly called penal, and that there is any "quantitative relation" between them and our punishment (p. 309). "Sufferings borne in the wrong spirit, unsubmissively or without recognition of their justice, are penal; but the spirit of humility and obedience makes them remedial and purgatorial" (p. 310). The strict law of retribution was therefore not carried out. "The atonement undoubtedly transgresses the strict law of retribution; but all forgiveness transgresses it" (p. 302). The relation of atonement to man's moral reformation—its "subjective" aspect—is also recognized. "No forgiveness is conceivable which does not in some degree relieve the offender of the consequences of his offence" (p. 301). There is an aspect of Christ's redemptive work in which it "effects our reunion with God by delivering us from the power of sin, and by filling us with the divine gift of life." This was, indeed, "the conception of our Lord's work which was chiefly in the minds of the early Christian writers" (p. 298). It is even said to be "the fault of much popular theology" that it neglects this aspect of the subject.

These scattered sentences are, of course, inadequate (as in previous cases) to represent the author's thought; but I trust they do not misrepresent it. In all these brief expositions the aim is to select the statements which will best illustrate the author's principles; his application and defence of them it is impossible to reproduce in detail. I should say that in Bishop Lyttelton's essay we have a substantial parallel to the theory current in the older New England theology. The strict law of retribution is not enforced on Christ; that is, "retributive justice" is not satisfied. Yet he endures the sufferings which in sinners would be punishment. What is this but the Grotian idea of a "penal example"? The essay deals mostly with the objective side of atonement, but it recognizes the fact that there is another side. No propitiation would save us if Christ did not really bring us to God in love and trust. We must recognize in this discussion an effort to show that atonement was not merely a matter of appeasing wrath or satisfying for sin, but that it was a method of saving men by bringing God and men into union and harmony. God is not satisfied except by really saving us.

In his treatise entitled *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*,[1] the Rev. John Scott Lidgett has a chapter on "The Satisfaction of God." The notion of satisfaction is interpreted, however, not from the standpoint of offended dignity or governmental necessity, but from that of God's fatherhood. "The fundamental condition of fatherly satisfaction is, that it shall satisfy the fatherly by perfecting the filial." It is necessary to such a satisfaction that the holiness of God and the heinousness of sin should be recognized and manifested. Christ so accomplishes this object as to satisfy both God and man (p. 302). "Atonement to fatherhood lies in restored, realized, and manifested sonship. That restored sonship is brought about by homage to the violated law, in submission to the punishment which expresses the mind of the Father and asserts the supremacy of the law" (pp. 269, 270). Mr. Lidgett speaks of Christ as living under "penal conditions" and as suffering the "penal consequences" of sin; but he does not regard this as the primary aspect of his saving work. It is only its negative side. The idea that "Christ suffered the penalty of sin, therefore I shall not," is pronounced a "miserably inadequate representation of the atonement." "Sin must be annulled if the condemnation and the consequences of sin are to be annulled" (p. 272). The essence of atonement lies in its spiritual significance; it carries us into "a region higher than the consequences of sin and wrath, to make satisfaction to that spiritual order of love and righteousness which has been set at naught and, so far as sin can effect it, destroyed; it must annul sin and all the works of sin" (p. 271). These few extracts give a very inadequate idea of the discussion, but will, I trust, serve to illustrate the author's method and principles. I should say that Mr. Lidgett has presented an ethicized governmental theory; God is conceived not as a Civil Ruler, but as a Father; his relation to men is paternal, and the aim of Christ's work is to recover men to the filial life.

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[1] London, 1898.

We turn next to the theory of Dr. J. McLeod Campbell.[1] As has been indicated, he takes his starting-point from the suggestion of Edwards that an adequate repentance (deemed by him to be impossible) would be a sufficient satisfaction for sin.[1] Dr. Campbell maintained that Christ had offered to God, on behalf of humanity, this requisite repentance, and so fulfilled the conditions of forgiveness. The theory is thus expressed: "Forgiveness must precede atonement; the atonement must be the form of the manifestation of the forgiving love of God, not its cause" (p. 16). Now Christ entered into a "perfect sympathy in the Father's condemnation of sin," endured "sufferings which are themselves the expression of the divine mind regarding our sins, and a manifestation by the Son of what our sins are to the Father's heart" (pp. 113, 114). Thus his sufferings were not penal, but were "the perfecting of the Son's witnessing for the Father" (p. 114). "That oneness of mind with the Father, which toward man took the form of condemnation of sin, would in the Son's dealing with the Father in relation to our sins, take the form of *a perfect confession of our sins*. This confession as to its own nature must have been *a perfect Amen in humanity to the judgment of God on the sin of man*."[2] "That response" (which Christ makes to the divine wrath against sin) "has all the elements of a *perfect repentance in humanity* for all the sin of man, — *a perfect sorrow* — *a perfect contrition* — all the elements of such a repentance, and that in absolute perfection, all — except the personal consciousness of sin; and in that *perfect response in Amen to the mind of God in relation to sin* is the wrath of God rightly met, and that is accorded to divine justice which is its due, and could alone satisfy it" (pp. 117, 118).

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[1] See *The Nature of the Atonement*. Sixth ed. London and New York, 1895.

It will be seen that Dr. Campbell held a doctrine of satisfaction to the divine anger against sin, but it was not a *penal* satisfaction; it was a satisfaction by a vicarious repentance, an expiatory sorrow and confession, offered to God for and in humanity by humanity's Head and Representative. He believed this to be a far profounder view of satisfaction than the conception of a vicarious punishment. "There is much less spiritual apprehension necessary to the faith that God punishes sin, than to the faith that our sins do truly grieve God. Therefore, men more easily believe that Christ's sufferings show how God can punish sin than that these sufferings are the divine feelings in relation to sin, made visible to us by being present in suffering flesh. Yet, however the former may terrify, the latter alone can purify" (p. 121). "We feel that such a repentance as we are supposing" (that is, a repentance ideally perfect) "would be the true and proper satisfaction to offended justice, and that there would be more atoning worth in one tear of the true and perfect sorrow than in endless ages of penal woe" (p. 125). There was a perfect response made by Christ to the feeling of God concerning sin. This was made for us by virtue of his union with us. Now as he thus said *Amen* to God's just judgment upon sin, so we must, in faith, say *Amen* to this condemnation of sin in the soul of Christ. "What I thus labored to impress on the mind of my reader is, that the necessity for the atonement which we are contemplating was moral and spiritual, arising out of our relation to God as the Father of our spirits, and not merely legal, arising out of our being under the law" (pp. 160, 161).

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[1] It is hardly correct to say, as is often done, that Campbell *derived his idea* of an "equivalent repentance" from Edwards. He says, This expression of Edwards "suggested to me that that earnest and deep thinker had really been on the verge of that conception of a moral and spiritual atonement *which was occupying my own thoughts*." *Op. cit.*, pp. 343, 344.

[2] Pp. 116, 117. I have italicized the most characteristic words.

We have already had occasion to note evidences of the influence upon later writers of this suggestive treatment of atonement. Its service has certainly been great in paving the way from legal to ethical interpretations. The most obvious question which it suggests is: Is it not as impossible for an innocent person to *repent* on behalf of the guilty as to be *punished* instead of the guilty? Is there not something incongruous and misleading in the terms "vicarious repentance" and "expiatory confession"? They have naturally given rise, in some minds, to the impression that Dr. Campbell's doctrine was that of an atonement as completely "outside of us" and as completely dissociated from our moral life, as the earlier theories conceived it to be. But this impression is certainly unwarranted. What justification it has lies in an infelicitous phraseology and, as Dr. Moberly has pointed out, in the fact that Dr. Campbell "discerned with more complete success the nature of the relation of Christ to God than that of the relation of men to Christ." Though not failing altogether at this point, he still left Christ too much outside our humanity instead of regarding him as "the very manifestation of our humanity, in its ideal reality of penitential holiness, before the Father."[1]

The work of Professor Moberly, to which reference has just been made, is wrought out on the lines laid down by Dr. McLeod Campbell. The death of Christ is viewed as the necessary climax of his life (p. 112). In life and in death he took the position of a "voluntary penitent, wholly one with the righteousness of God in the sacrifice of himself" (p. 110). Effectual atonement for sin requires two things, a perfect penitence and a perfect holiness. "If," says Dr. Moberly, "my repentance, in reference to the past, could be quite perfect, such penitence would mean that my personality was once more absolutely one with righteousness in condemning sin even in, and at the cost of, myself. Such personal re-identity with righteousness, if it were possible, would be a real contradiction of my past. It would be atonement, and I should, in it, be once more actually righteous" (p. 110). But to experience any such atoning, effectual repentance and so to re-identify ourselves perfectly with righteousness is, for us, impossible. Now this is what Christ does for us and by his Spirit helps us to do for ourselves.

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[1] *Atonement and Personality*, pp. 402–405. It should here be pointed out, however, that Dr. Moberly objects only to the phrase, "expiatory confession of our sins," not to the terms "a perfect repentance," "a perfect sorrow," "a perfect contrition," offered by Christ on our behalf. This author himself, as we shall see, holds to the realization by Christ of "a perfect penitence" or "penitential holiness" in and for humanity. His really serious objection relates to the other point mentioned above. Dr. Moberly himself adopts the phrase, "Christ confessed the sin of humanity," not externally, but "by being the very manifestation of humanity" (p. 405). But what is this but what Dr. Campbell meant by "a perfect repentance *in humanity*," a "confession of sin *in humanity*," "a perfect *Amen in humanity* to the judgment of God on the sin of man." *The Nature of the Atonement*, pp. 117, 119.

But here we meet the objection previously noticed: Is not penitence correlative to personal sin? Can one repent of any sin but his own? So far from allowing that this objection is valid, Dr. Moberly maintains that "penitence, in the perfectness of its full meaning, is not even conceivably possible, except it be to the personally sinless" (p. 117). Penitence in its truest, deepest meaning is not merely or mainly regret or remorse or a feeling of guilt; it is "self-identity with righteousness." Now it is a fact of life that the blameless do suffer and sorrow on behalf of the sinful far more deeply and keenly than the sinful do on their own behalf (p. 118). The possibility of this vicarious suffering and penitence is grounded, in part, in the nature of sympathy and, in part, in the purity of the sufferer which is the very condition of his realizing the real nature of sin. The sinner himself does not, and cannot, realize it. The very fact that he has sinned, and that the sin has passed into his character, dulls the edge of his penitence and dims its truth (p. 122). Now among men all such vicarious penitence is imperfect; it could be perfect only in one who had a full realization of the character and consequences of sin; that is, to a being himself sinless and possessing an unclouded vision of the holiness of God (p. 127). It is only Christ who, in the union with man made possible by infinite love, is able, by virtue of his own sinless holiness and consequent sense of the evil of sin, to make that supreme acknowledgment of sin's ill desert and offer that perfect homage to righteousness which is required from our sinful race (p. 128). "The suffering involved in this," continues Dr. Moberly, "is not, in him, punishment, or the terror of punishment; but it is the full realizing, in the personal consciousness, of the truth of sin, and the disciplinary pain of the conquest of sin; it is that full self-identification of human nature, within range of sin's challenge and sin's scourge, with holiness as the divine condemnation of sin, which was at once the necessity — and the impossibility — of human penitence" (p. 130).[1]

For a fuller explanation of the author's meaning in this somewhat unusual use of terms the reader must consult the opening chapters of Dr. Moberly's book, where the ideas of punishment, penitence, and forgiveness are subjected to a penetrating analysis. It is equally important for understanding how the author conceives of this atoning penitence as availing for us, to read the chapters following that from which I have quoted (ch. vi), on the subjective and objective aspects of atonement, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the nature and relations of human personality. I regret that I have only been able to give a somewhat formal definition of this suggestive exposition. The kinship of the author's theory with that of Dr. Campbell and, indirectly at least, with some parts of the essay of Edwards on Satisfaction, will, I am sure, be evident to the reader.[2]

As Mr. Lidgett developed his doctrine of satisfaction in accord with the emphasis placed by Jesus himself, as by modern theology, upon the fatherhood of God, so has the Rev. W. L. Walker, in *The Cross and the Kingdom*,[3] interpreted the saving work of Christ in the light of one of his own dominant conceptions — that of the Kingdom of God. No circumstance could better illustrate the difference between the ancient and the modern method of dealing with this subject than the use in this connection of these favorite conceptions of Jesus. The idea of God's fatherhood, and the great primary aim of Jesus to found and foster the Kingdom of the Godlike on earth, have little or no place in the "historic theories" of his mission. God is, for them, a feudal Lord, a moral Governor, an Administrator of criminal law, and Christ's work is to square accounts with him, — by some homage or suffering or punishment to quench his resentment so as to clear the way for a possible remission of penalty. All this seems to Mr. Walker, as to most modern theologians, too abstract and theoretic, too remote from the thought and purpose of Jesus, to satisfy "the modern mind" religiously or the historical spirit theoretically.[1] He declares that "the cross was the result and the expression of forgiveness in the divine fatherly heart, not in any sense its cause — the ground (or perhaps we should rather say the *means*) of the *proclamation* of the divine forgiveness, not the ground of that forgiveness itself" (p. 199).

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[1] Mr. Walker objects to the application of the term "penitence" to Christ as strenuously as Dr. Moberly objected to Dr. Campbell's similar use of the term "confession." "Penitence," he says, "is not conceivable save on the part of one who has actually sinned. Christ's identification of himself with sinful humanity could not go so far as to create the feelings implied in real penitence." This author prefers the term "acknowledgment"; Christ acknowledged, on behalf of humanity, the ill desert of sin. *The Cross and the Kingdom*, p. 229.

[2] In this brief reference to Dr. Moberly's work I have sought to touch upon what seems to be the dominant note of his book. But I find it impossible to extract from the volume as a whole any self-consistent general view of our subject. The composite character of the author's opinions has been exhibited by Dr. H. Rashdall in *The Journal of Theological Studies* for 1902, pp. 178–211.

[3] Edinburgh, 1902.

It would be interesting to analyze this author's exposition in detail; but since that is impracticable, I will select a few sentences which will illustrate his point of view and some of his governing principles: "To forgive men without impressing on them the evil of sin so as to save them from it, would harm them rather than bless them" (p. 221). Death came to Christ "in order that the evil of sin and its evil consequences might be fully manifested and impressed on the consciences of men" (p. 224). "If sin caused such suffering to the most righteous person — even to the Son of God himself — how evil, how hideous it must be" (p. 225)![2] "That which Christ endured came upon him in his fidelity to his mission to establish the Kingdom of God. But he accepted the suffering that so came upon him with a direct relation to sin, . . . and it was so ordered that he passed through such an experience as sets forth to us what sin really is and what it deserves before God — awakening our consciences to see, in what Christ suffered, that which sin really deserves to suffer, and must suffer" (p. 231). "The very life of God, as that of perfect Love, is a life of constant sacrifice" (p. 268). "The cross outside of us, while it brings divine forgiveness, can only *save* us as it becomes the cross within our own souls, on which we are crucified with Christ" (p. 280). It is evident that, according to this theory, we should see in the work of Christ a satisfaction to the moral perfections of God through his achieving the purpose of his holy love to win men to fellowship of life with himself in his Kingdom.

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[1] "There are not wanting serious signs that the old juridical language fails to appeal as it once did to the spiritual consciousness of a large section of Christian believers. It sounds artificial; it stands aloof from the dominant ideas of the time; there is not a little in it which shocks the moral sense of many devout minds that are earnestly desirous of arriving at something like a consistent theory of the atonement." E. Griffith-Jones in *The Ascent through Christ*, p. 289.

[2] *Cf.* Dr. J. T. Hutcheson: "He condemned sin by his death — indeed, by allowing it to condemn itself. Just as some atrocious act

In common with a considerable number of modern writers,[1] Principal A. M. Fairbairn frankly adopts the so-called "Patripassian heresy" and expounds the atonement in the light of it. "Theology," he says, "has no falser idea than that of the impassibility of God. If he is capable of sorrow, he is capable of suffering; and were he without the capacity for either, he would be without any feeling of the evil of sin or the misery of man."[2] Dr. Fairbairn further holds that the end of God's judgments is not merely penal or retributive, but "corrective, reclamatory, and disciplinary." Now in Christ the feeling of God toward sin is revealed, and men are made to share it. The sufferings and death of Christ "are a revelation of

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of wrong, of violence, or of shame condemns crime, in the eyes of men, by showing them what crime can do, so he allowed sin to condemn itself by showing forever what sin can do." *A View of the Atonement*, p. 137. New York, 1897.

[1] *E.g.* Drs. Horace Bushnell and Roswell D. Hitchcock. The latter writes: "What right has any one to say that God is passionless? God himself has never said it. He is *not* passionless. Like the sun, he is all aflame. God feels rebellion, and has always felt it. His agony over sin is eternal." *Eternal Atonement*, pp. 10, 11.

[2] *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology*, p. 483.

sin as well as of God ; they show it as nothing else could have done. And revelation is here judgment ; for sin to be discovered is to be condemned" (p. 485). "The atonement burns into the soul of the sinner the sense of the evil and the shame of sin, forces him to look at it with God's eyes, to judge it with his conscience, to hate it with his hate — in a word, to change his own attitude to it for God's. And when this is the case the sinner is saved, but so saved that his salvation is the supreme victory of righteousness and sovereignty as well as of love and grace" (p. 483). It is obvious that we have here the elements of an ethical interpretation. "Whatever the death of Christ may signify," says Dr. Fairbairn elsewhere, "it does not mean an expedient for quenching the wrath of God, or for buying off man from his vengeance."[1]

In concluding this sketch of that group of theories which I have designated by the words "ethical satisfaction," I would call attention to the latest treatise on Systematic Theology which has fallen under my notice, that of Professor Henry C. Sheldon.[2] The theory of atonement advocated by Dr. Sheldon might, I think, be described as a thoroughly ethicized governmentalism. I quote a few sentences which may serve as hints of the view taken. The objective element in the atonement means "the conditioning agency of the divine holiness and justice upon the method of the divine love" (p. 405). "We may think of the work of Christ as having objective worth, not indeed as giving God an incentive to be gracious, but as providing a fit method for the dispensation of his grace in a world-embracing economy" (p. 410). "There is no occasion for a disjunction between the personal and the governmental in God" (p. 408). "Love and righteousness admit of no divorce in the practically efficient scheme" (p. 410). "One self-consistent disposition in God is to be regarded as back of his entire dealing with the race" (p. 411). Christ's work was God's "self-consistent procedure for producing repentance and administering grace," and it was the ethical elements in that work which were efficacious in meeting both the subjective and the objective demands of the case (pp. 411, 412). Thus the work of Christ "renders special tribute to the ethical nature and government of God" (p. 412).

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[1] *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion*, p. 500.

[2] *System of Christian Doctrine*, by Henry C. Sheldon, Professor of Theology in Boston University. Cincinnati and New York, 1903.

CHAPTER V

MODERN "SUBJECTIVE" THEORIES

We turn next to a series of attempts to construe the work of Christ as an actual saving power directly operating upon human life and, accordingly, to interpret his death, primarily, as a factor in his influence upon the moral life of the world. These theories speak not of a propitiation or satisfaction of God by sacrifice, but of a revelation of God in sacrifice. They say that God does not need to be reconciled to man; it is man who needs to be reconciled to God.[1]

It is common for those who maintain that God required a satisfaction for sin — or, at least, that he was obliged to adopt measures whereby his attitude or relation toward the sinful race might be changed — to characterize the views to which I have referred as "subjective," "manward," or "moral influence" theories. The claim is that they represent the work of Christ as effecting a change only in man's attitude to God, and not also in God's attitude to man; it influences man but does not influence God because it does not act upon him, but proceeds from him, and expresses his nature and feeling. The objection made to these theories is that they argue (as did Augustine): How could God send his Son to die for us if he were not already reconciled in his feeling toward us?[2] However various and mutually contradictory the theories as to the "objective" or "Godward" aspect of Christ's death may have been, they have generally united in representing the "subjective" views as conspicuously one-sided and defective, and hence the phrases "moral influence theory" and "substitution by *mere* sympathy" have long been terms of reproach. We can better judge in what sense the views in question are "merely subjective," and how far that is a ground of objection to them, after reviewing the opinions of some of their representatives.

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[1] "Christ was not in the world reconciling God to men, but God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. Christ does not commend his love to us over against the justice and displeasure of God, but God commends his own love to us in that when we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Professor F. C. Porter in the *American Journal of Theology*, January, 1904, p. 14.

[2] *On the Trinity*, Bk. XIII. ch. xi.

In Germany a powerful movement of religious thought along the lines just indicated was begun by Schleiermacher (1768–1834). He repudiated the doctrines of expiatory suffering and of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us, and held that the redemptive value of Christ lay not primarily in his death, but in the power and effect of his consciousness of God into participation in which we are admitted by faith and in which we find joy and peace. Christ, indeed, suffered for us in virtue of his unique union with us. Implicated as he was in the drama of our sinful life, he could not but encounter and endure the evils consequent upon sin which he had himself in no way personally deserved. As the perfect man, the representative and recapitulation of our humanity, he suffered with and for us the consequences of our sins and thus in and by him humanity atoned for its sin. But this work of Christ was not a propitiation of God, but the means whereby the human conscience makes a subjective expiation by dying to sin and attaining a new life in Christ.[1]

Among those who developed their thought largely on the lines of Schleiermacher may be mentioned Carl Immanuel Nitzsch (1787–1868) and Richard Rothe (1799–1867). The former conceives the teaching, the acts, and the death of Christ as a unity, and connects them all with the founding of the Kingdom of God. Christ unites himself with us in suffering, and thus brings home to us both the evil of sin and the grace of God. In his sympathy he bears the penalty of the world's sin. But his work is wrought upon and in men ; it is a work of enlightenment, of inspiration, and of moral recreation.[1]

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[1] According to Schleiermacher "Christ's redemption is the actual liberation of believers from the sin that prevails in them, by communication of the power of his consciousness of God, which the individual receives in the fellowship of those who resemble him." "Christ having possessed the consciousness of sin as a sympathetic feeling, while yet in his sinless conduct of life he had shut out sin from himself both as an act and as a state, he takes up believers in the fellowship of his activity and of his life on condition that they die to sin." Ritschl, *History*, pp. 467, 468. *Cf. Der christliche Glaube*, §§ 100–105. Characteristic passages from Schleiermacher's exposition of the subject are given, in translation, in Dr. Fisher's *History of Doctrine*, pp. 505–507.

Rothe insisted that no doctrine of Christ's work was adequate which failed to show how it actually removed and destroyed sin and restored men to right relations with God. Now the problem is this: How can God, in his holiness, forgive the sinner until he is actually freed from his sin, and yet how can he ever be thus freed until he is first forgiven? In order to salvation, God must forgive the sinner in advance — before his sin is overcome and done away. But how is this consistent with the divine righteousness? The atonement is the solution. God forgives sin in advance upon receipt of a guaranty that sin will be put away. This guaranty is, as it were, furnished to God by mankind in the person of their representative, the second Adam. God may safely forgive the sins of the world in advance, since in Christ he has the assurance of the emancipation from sin of all who will enter into fellowship with him.

But how does Christ furnish this assurance? Answer: By perfectly qualifying himself to be the Redeemer. This he has done in his achievement of moral perfection, — by his perfect harmony with the will of God and his perfect self-identification with men. Thus he sanctified himself — devoted himself absolutely to the will of God and the good of mankind — that men also might in the fellowship of his life be sanctified in truth. This self-consecration, born of love, stopped short of no labor or suffering. It led him down into the depths of men's experience in evil so that he shared in the deepest and truest way the consequences of their sin. He bore the sins of men in his heart. Through the vicariousness of love he shared the sinner's suffering lot. But in submitting to sin he triumphed over it. He kept his own life spotless and has shown us the path to the same conquest. Thus in Christ God forgives by anticipation the sins of the world, since in Christ he has the guaranty of sin's undoing for all who will unite their lives to him. In Christ sin is pardoned because it is, or is to be, virtually destroyed.[1]

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[1] *System der christlichen Lehre*, §§ 132–140.

Another wide departure from Lutheran orthodoxy was made by the Erlangen professor, J. C. K. von Hofmann (1810–1877),[2] who repudiated the view that Christ furnished a vicarious obedience and so fulfilled the law for others; nor would he admit that his endurance of suffering was penal. Christ's work was an absolute devotion of himself, even unto death, for our salvation. It may be called a sacrifice, but only in a metaphorical sense, as the act of a mother may be so called when she exposes herself to death to save her child. Jesus' death cannot be separated from his life; it was incidental, though inevitable, to his saving mission in general which was to reveal and make effective in men at once the holiness and the love of God. Hofmann makes the life of Christ primary in the consideration of his saving work, and represents him as enduring the consequences of sin only indirectly. For him reconciliation is virtually one with justification.

Some of the leading positions of Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889), which bear upon our subject, may be stated thus: (1) The wrath of God is only an eschatological conception; only against persistent and final impenitence will God display his wrath; men are not here and now the objects of his wrath. (2) The terms "justice" and "righteousness," as used in Scripture, do not denote a retributive or judicial quality in God, — his disposition or impulse to punish, — but are names for the persistency of his purpose of grace. (3) Hence there is no necessity, or even possibility, for a satisfaction of justice, considered as a penal element in God's being, before forgiveness can take place, or as a condition of its bestowment; God's satisfaction of justice can mean only the realization of his eternal purpose of love. (4) Christ maintained in life and in death an unbroken fellowship with God, and it is the one great object of his work to introduce men into the same consciousness of God's love and fatherhood, and into the same fellowship of life with him which the Son himself enjoyed. (5) This aim is realized through the founding and upbuilding of the Kingdom of God on earth, which is the community of the Godlike, the fellowship of those who share Christ's spirit in the life of conscious sonship to God. (6) Christ's sufferings and death were experiences which lay in the path of his duty in revealing God and in living the perfect life. (7) He procures the forgiveness of sins by introducing men into the same relation to God which he occupies, that is, by making them members of the Christian community. (8) Christ revealed the guilt and hatefulness of sin by revealing and realizing the holy life. His revelation of the guilt of sin was the negative aspect of his revelation of holiness. He thus sets the evil of sin in the light of perfect goodness, and this is its condemnation.

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[1] *Dogmatik*, II. §§ 36–55. Rothe's idea that Christ furnished to God a warrant or assurance that sin should be conquered and undone, has been reproduced by F. A. B. Nitzsch, *Dogmatik*, pp. 490, 494, 495.

[2] *Der Schriftbeweis;* also *Schutzschriften für eine neue Weise alte Wahrheit zu lehren*, *passim*.

I have made this brief summary, which professes only to give some of the outstanding points of Ritschl's theory, after a careful study of his discussion,[1] but in order to illustrate it somewhat more adequately I will add a few selected sentences of his own. "All the sufferings that befell Christ he steadfastly endured, without once proving untrue to his vocation, or failing to assert it." They are, therefore, "manifestations of his loyalty to his vocation." His violent death, also, "was destined under God's appointment to serve the same end."[2] Christ is "that

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[1] *Die christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, 3 vols. Vol. I, containing the history of the doctrine (already repeatedly quoted), and Vol. III, containing the constructive development of the doctrine, are translated, Edinburgh, 1872 and 1900, respectively. *Cf.*, also, Professor Garvie's *The Ritschlian Theology*, Edinburgh, 1899, chs. ix, x.

[2] *Justification and Reconciliation*, pp. 448, 449.

Being in the world in whose self-end God makes effective and manifest, after an original manner, his own eternal self-end, whose whole activity, therefore, in discharge of his vocation, forms the material of that complete revelation of God which is present in him, in whom, in short, the Word of God is a human person" (p. 451). Ritschl declares that the forensic interpretation of Christ's work "conflicts in every respect with the religious interest of the Christian." "The assumption, that in God righteousness and grace work in opposite directions, is in so far irreligious that the unity of the divine will forms an inviolable condition of all confidence in God." "It is unbiblical to assume that between God's grace or love and his righteousness there is an opposition which, in its bearing upon the sinful race of men, would lead to a contradiction, only to be solved through the intervention of Christ. . . . God's righteousness is his self-consistent and undeviating action in behalf of the salvation of the members of his community; in essence it is identical with his grace" (pp. 473, 474). Ritschl denies that the Old Testament sacrifices were conceived as "moving God from wrath to grace," or that "the sacrificial offering included in itself a penal act, executed not upon the guilty person, but upon the victim who takes his place" (p. 474). Christ was, "in the first place, a Priest on his own behalf"; that is, "the subject of that true and perfect religion compared with which no other has been able to bring men to the desired goal of nearness to God." "He is, therefore, also the first who was qualified in the true and final manner to exercise that fellowship with God which was the aim of every religion, and to experience in himself in its fulness the reciprocal and saving influence of God" (p. 475). The author rejects the penal view of Christ's sufferings on the ground that punishment implies guilt; and Christ was guiltless. If it be said that his sufferings had the *quality and worth* of punishment, though they were not punishment,—that is really to abandon the strictly legal interpretation of God's government of the world and to replace the idea of punishment by some other conception. In the attempt of Grotius, for example, *poena* is resolved into *afflictio*. "Christ cannot possibly have regarded as punishment the sufferings which, through the fellowship with sinful humanity attaching to his vocation, he brought on himself as the consequence of man's hostility to good, even although he cherished the compassionate purpose of contributing by his death toward the removal of this guilt" (p. 479). The fact that Christ pronounced to the penitent the forgiveness of their sins, refutes the idea that his work "in any way made God willing to forgive" (p. 537). Ritschl agrees with Hofmann that Christ's expiation "can have no reference to God." Thus the proposition that "Christ expiated the sin of humanity" can be properly understood only as meaning that "he reconciles sinners with God, that is, establishes peace for them Godwards" (p. 569).

There has been in Switzerland and in France a movement of theological thought similar to that which we have just sketched. It was powerfully influenced by Alexandre Vinet (1797–1847), who might be called the French Schleiermacher. We will briefly illustrate it by reference to two recent thinkers,—Auguste Bouvier (1826–1893), Professor of Theology in Geneva, and Auguste Sabatier (1839–1901), Professor of Theology in Paris. Bouvier asserts the necessity that in the work of salvation, sin be shown in its true character and condemned as odious in history; the human conscience demands this condemnation. It is also necessary that humanity or humanity's representative should acknowledge suffering and death as just, and freely submit to them. This is the psychological foundation of the notion of expiation. Further, man, or his representative, must offer himself to God without reserve; the love of man must respond to the divine advances. This is the basis of the idea of reconciliation.

These thoughts are developed as follows: Christ was never more holy and just than in the very moment of his passion. In the anguish of his conflict with evil he perfectly fulfilled the moral law and glorified it in the eyes of men. Jesus rendered sin odious, and by this means conquered it; his victory over evil and his entrance into the heavenly life attested by the apostles, rendered to the moral law an absolute satisfaction and glorified it. Jesus freely consented to his death. He transformed into an act of love a brutal reality which seemed imposed upon him by necessity. By a voluntary, deliberate, and profoundly intelligent sympathy Jesus entered into the situation of humanity; he took men's place; he was substituted for them; he made expiation for them in suffering on their behalf. This statement is not to be understood juridically, but it is clear to the Christian conscience when we consider the inner drama which was enacted in the soul of Christ. Jesus gave himself up entirely to God, even to death, reconciled humanity to God, and so offered to God in his person that which God demands of humanity, — the gift of itself. All this assumes the representative character and function of Christ, the reciprocal and conscious relations between him and men, the solidarity, the communion which implies a relation of faith and love between men and himself.

This saving work is not an operation completed in some supernatural region, a transaction between the Father and the Son in heaven. It is an anthropological drama of which the consciousness of Jesus is the sacred scene, the plot of which is the relation between man and God. This drama should be reproduced in the soul of every Christian. The work of Christ is not a passive work; it is not the value of the blood of Jesus, but his active love, which is effective. The responsibility of man is not weakened by the death of Christ; rather does his death awaken the sense of sin which leads man to conversion. The Christian should make expiation with Christ. Reconciliation, redemption, the gift of eternal life — such is, in three words, the work of Jesus. Reconciliation is inseparable from his person, which is in itself the perfect example of the divine life in the human state. Moreover, Christ has taught humanity to make expiation for sin, that is, to accept the just chastisement of it. He communicates to those who are united to him by faith the power to renounce evil; he has thus delivered them from the power of sin. Finally, by his militant holiness and his active love, by all the energies of his personality, he reëstablishes the divine life in humanity; he gives to all his own the eternal life.[1]

Sabatier believes that God requires no satisfaction but sincere repentance. Was not God satisfied with the publican's cry, God be merciful to me, a sinner? Jesus did not transact with God to procure the salvation of sinners. God did not need to be reconciled to man, but man needed to be recovered to God. Pardon can be granted only on condition of repentance, and the work of Christ is to evoke that penitence in the individual and in the race which is necessary to reconciliation with God. By his teaching, his deeds, his sufferings, and his death, Jesus seeks to touch and win the hearts of men. His death is in no way different, in its purpose and effect, from his life; it is the consummation of his work. "It is the most powerful appeal to repentance which humanity has ever heard, and also the most efficacious, the most fruitful in marvellous results. The cross is the expiation of sins only because it is the cause of the repentance to which remission is promised. The more I have reflected upon it, the more have I arrived at this firm conviction, that there is in the moral world, and before the God of the gospel, no other expiation but repentance, that is to say, this inner drama of the conscience in which man dies to sin and rises again to the life of righteousness. There is nothing greater nor better, for repentance is the destruction of sin and the salvation of the sinner; it is the accomplishment in us of the work of God." Christ's revelation of the divine love and his willing submission to suffering in the effort to win us to holiness reveal the enormity of sin as nothing else could do. "The love of the Father appears to us in all its power; the sin of man, our sin, appears in all its horror. Morally, says the apostle, we die with him, and if death is the expiation of our sins, this expiation is achieved in us at the foot of the cross. But what is this mystical death if not a full and perfect repentance ?"[1]

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[1] *Auguste Bouvier, Théologien Protestant*, par J. E. Roberty, pp. 199–202. Paris and Geneva, 1901.

From this excursion into foreign fields we return to consider the parallel movement of British and American thought. I shall select for brief notice three representatives of each : Frederick Denison Maurice, John Caird, and Benjamin Jowett ; and Horace Bushnell, Elisha Mulford, and William Newton Clarke.

The views of Maurice are developed from the conception of Christ's being the archetype or root of humanity, in virtue of which he sustains a unique and original relation to the race. He is an eternal second Adam. In the incarnation he becomes the Mediator between men and God, bringing them into union with God through fellowship with himself. The basis of the theory is a realistic union of Christ with mankind. Now the sufferings and death of Christ were not penal, but representative. As the sinless, archetypal man he bore the sins of the world in the sense that he experienced the pain and shame which only a perfect Being, completely one with man, can feel on account of sin. His sacrifice of perfect self-devotion evinced both the holiness and the love of God. He satisfied God by presenting to him, on behalf of humanity, the perfect embodiment of his own holiness and love. His whole life and experience were a perfect realization of the mind and will of God, and hence a perfect "satisfaction." "A perfectly holy and loving Being can be satisfied only with a holiness and love corresponding to his own ; Christ satisfied the Father by presenting the image of his own holiness and love ; in his sacrifice and death all that holiness and love came forth completely. How, then, can we tolerate for an instant the notion of God which would represent him as satisfied by the punishment of sin, not by the purity and graciousness of the

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[1] *La Doctrine de l'Epiation et son Évolution Historique*, pp. 105–109, Paris, 1904. An English translation of this book has recently appeared (1904). *Cf.* pp. 127–130.

Son?"[1] In the discussions of Maurice we observe the struggles of a strong mind in freeing itself from the current orthodoxy, but both the diffuse style and the apologetic tone of his writings on the subject make it difficult to define his views with clearness and precision. The general resemblance of his thought, however, to that of men like Schleiermacher and McLeod Campbell is evident.

In his Gifford Lectures[2] Principal John Caird raises the question "whether there are any elements of the suffering which flows from sin, which a morally pure and sinless being can experience." He answers, "Not only can a good man suffer for sin, but it may be laid down as a principle that he will suffer for it in proportion to his goodness." Hence "it was possible for Christ, who knew no sin, to bear on his soul a burden of humiliation, shame, sorrow, for our sins, which in one aspect of it was more profound and intense than we could ever feel for ourselves." "He was endowed with a moral susceptibility infinitely more quick and keen than the best and purest of mankind," and therefore "the presence of sin created in him a repugnance, a moral recoil, a sorrow and shame, which the fallen and guilty could never feel for themselves" (II. 220–223). Now such a moral and spiritual suffering with and for sinners would constitute an atonement or satisfaction more real than any outward infliction; it would be "a just and righteous expression of the divine condemnation of sin, a profound response to that condemnation as just and righteous" (II. 218). But can it be transferred to us? Can we make it our own? If not, it can have no saving value for us. "To emphasize atonement so as to exclude every subjective element, would be to make its benefits attainable indiscriminately by the indifferent and the impenitent, alike with the soul that is penetrated by the sense of its spiritual needs. A salvation that is absolutely complete independently of any moral activity in the recipient, would be a salvation that superseded any demand for moral goodness or holiness of life, and that could be claimed and possessed by those who remained in their sins, impenitent and unbelieving" (II. 228, 229). But this expiatory moral suffering of Christ is made ours by faith. Justification by faith "means that faith is the spiritual link that brings us into living union with Christ; so that not by any arbitrary supposition or legal fiction, but actually, in the fundamental principle of our moral life, we become one with him." "It is only thus by the conception that the essential principle of the life of Christ becomes by faith the essential principle of our own, that the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction for sin and imputed righteousness can be freed from that character of unreality and fiction which has been often ascribed to it" (II. 226).

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[1] *Theological Essays*, p. 125.

[2] *The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity*, Glasgow, 1899.

Professor Jowett devoted a spirited essay to a review of the scriptural data bearing upon our subject and to a critique of the current popular opinions.[1] His principal contentions are, that in theology "we are more under the influence of rhetoric than in other branches of knowledge"; that the Scriptures employ a great variety of terms, mainly figurative, to express the saving value of Christ's life and death; but that this popular and fluid language does not properly lend itself to the construction of fine-spun theories; that Christ himself does not teach that his death was to be an atonement or satisfaction for sin; that the apostolic description of him as a sacrifice is spiritually meant; that Christ himself pronounced the forgiveness of sins without a hint of a satisfaction being necessary; that he "bore our sins" in the same sense in which he "bore our sicknesses" (Mt. viii. 17); that he spoke of his death as that of a righteous man who "lays down his life for his friends"; that the historic theories are built on "rhetoric turned into logic," that is, by means of an unwarranted use of popular and figurative language; that they are constructed chiefly out of the incidental Jewish elements which survived in early Christianity; that they issue in a scheme of fictions, such as imputed righteousness, and of immoralities, such as the punishment of the innocent, or the setting forth of the Holy One of

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[1] *Essays and Dissertations*, London, 1894, pp. 317–369.

God as a penal example, and that they are powerless to show how any such apparatus of satisfactions and balances can really save men, that is, recover them to a holy life.

The essay is mainly historical and critical, but the author expresses the opinion that the moral theory which "reads the doctrine of atonement in the light of the divine love only," and regards it as the object of Christ's sufferings and death to "draw men's hearts to God by the vision of redeeming love," "seems to do the least violence to our moral feelings" (p. 354). Perhaps his clearest positive statement is the following: "The death of Christ is the fulfilment and consummation of his life, the greatest moral act ever done in this world, the highest manifestation of perfect love, the centre in which the rays of love converge and meet, the extremest abnegation or annihilation of self. It is the death of One who seals with his blood the witness of the truth which he came into the world to teach, which therefore confirms our faith in him as well as animates our love. It is the death of One who says at the last hour, 'Of them that thou gavest me, I have not lost one'— of One who, having come forth from God, and having finished the work which he came into the world to do, returns to God. It is a death in which all the separate gifts of heroes and martyrs are united in a divine excellence — of One who most perfectly foresaw all things that were coming upon him — who felt all, and shrank not — of One who, in the hour of death, set the example to his followers of praying for his enemies. It is a death which, more even than his life, is singular and mysterious, in which nevertheless we all are partakers — in which there was the thought and consciousness of mankind to the end of time, which has also the power of drawing to itself the thoughts of men to the end of time" (pp. 365, 366).[1]

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[1] Professor Moberly thinks that this somewhat polemic essay served a good and useful purpose in its time, but intimates that its description of orthodox views is hardly less than a caricature of any opinions that exist, or are at all influential, at present, and that Jowett's plea for a view of Christ's work which can be ethically justified is scarcely needed to-day (*Atonement and Personality*, pp. 386–389). There is some force in both

The most widely known American representative of the "moral influence theory" is Horace Bushnell. Repudiating both the penal and the governmental interpretation of atonement, Dr. Bushnell constructed his theory upon the vicariousness of love — the ability and disposition of love to enter into the woes of its objects and to share their burdens, "taking half itself." He denied that Christ endured the penalty of our sin or suffered as a penal example; he denied that God was propitiated (in the current acceptation of the term) or needed to be reconciled to us, and that Christ's death opened the way to forgiveness or laid a basis for it. He held, on the contrary, that the work of Christ was throughout an expression of the nature and purpose of God, wherein God revealed his holy love — his gracious disposition to save men from sin to holiness. Toward the end of *The Vicarious Sacrifice* he says: "By the previous exposition Christ is shown to be a Saviour, not as being a ground of justification, but as being the Moral Power of God upon us, so a power of salvation. His work terminates, not in the release of penalties by due compensation, but in the transformation of character, and the rescue, in that manner, of guilty men from the retributive causations provoked by their sin. He does not prepare the remission of sins in the sense of a mere letting go, but he executes the remission by taking away the sins and dispensing the justification of life. This one word 'life' is the condensed import of all that he is, or undertakes to be" (p. 449).

But there is another aspect of Dr. Bushnell's teaching which is commonly overlooked in the popular and polemic references to this theory; I refer to what Paul called the "manifestation of God's righteousness" in the work of Christ. I will illustrate his views on this point by reference to a few representative expressions made at different periods of his life. In his earliest discussion of atonement

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these contentions, but I think that our review of current opinions has shown that efforts to "moralize" the doctrine in question still have their place and occasion, and that some of Jowett's suggestions are still pertinent and timely.

in the discourse at Cambridge,[1] he repeatedly referred to the necessity that any work of salvation should preserve and maintain the sanctity of violated law. In one single paragraph in which he is describing Christ's mission of recovering man to God and obedience, he employs, among the terms by which he describes it, the following phrases: "to reëstablish the law as a living power in man's heart"; "an expression of his sense of the value of the law"; "declares its sacredness"; "a sense of the eternal sanctity of the law"; "a more tremendous awe of it in our conscience"; "the practical establishment of his law" (pp. 228, 229).

In the same discourse he declares: "It is not Christianity, as I view it, to go forth and declare that God is so good, so lenient, such a fatherly Being, that he forgives freely. No; God is better than that — so good, so fatherly, that he will not only remit sins, but will so maintain the sanctity of his law as to make us feel them. The let-go system, the overlooking, accommodating, smoothing method of mere leniency, is a virtual surrender of all exactness, order, and law. The law is made void, nothing stands firm. God is a willow, bending to the breath of mortals. There is no throne left, no authority, nothing to move the conscience — therefore really no goodness" (p. 272). Elsewhere in the discourse he says: "It is even a fundamental condition, as regards moral effect on our character, that, while courage and hope are given us, we should be made, at the same time, to feel the intensest possible sense of the sanctity of the law, and the inflexible righteousness of God. What we need, in this view, is some new expression of God which, taken as addressed *to us*, will keep alive the impression in us, that God suffers no laxity. In a word, we must be made to feel, in the very article of forgiveness, when it is offered, the essential and eternal sanctity of God's law — his own immovable adherence to it, as the only basis of order and well-being in the universe" (p. 218).

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[1] Delivered in July, 1848, and published in 1849 in the volume, *God in Christ*.

Many pages in the various writings of Dr. Bushnell on atonement are devoted to maintaining and expounding this view, that in Christ's sufferings and death is to be seen the supreme testimony to the holiness of God and the heinousness of sin. Take this example from *The Vicarious Sacrifice:*[1] "To magnify love, therefore, even the love of the cross, as being itself the new creating power of God, would be a very great mistake, if the righteous rule of God is not somehow included. When Jesus in his sacrifice takes our lot upon his feeling, and goes even to the cross for us, we need also to conceive that he does this for the right, and because the everlasting word of righteousness commands him" (p. 171). In the same connection he declares that Christ's moral power is not the power of mere example, nor the revelation of God's love alone, but that in his suffering and death we behold the operation in salvation of all God's perfections. The Third Part of this book abounds in such titles as these: "The Law Precept duly Sanctified;" "Legal Enforcements not Diminished;" "God's Rectoral Honor effectively Maintained." It should be remembered, also, that in the supplementary volume, *Forgiveness and Law*,[2] designed to supplant Parts III and IV of *The Vicarious Sacrifice* as more adequately expressing his view of the Godward aspect of Christ's work, Dr. Bushnell asserted what he held to be "a real propitiation of God" (p. 12), which "comprises both the reconciliation of men to God, and of God to men" (p. 33). This propitiation he conceived to consist in God's "making cost to himself" in forgiveness, in the suffering which is the necessary correlate and pre-condition of pardoning offenders, whereby God "atones himself into the gentleness and patience of love" (pp. 48, 49). The scriptural descriptions of an appeasement of God from without, the "altar-forms" of biblical thought, Dr. Bushnell explained in essentially the same way as Calvin did when he said, "Such modes of expression are accommodated to our capacity, that we may better understand how miserable and calamitous our condition is, out of Christ."[3] Calvin added that these representations are, nevertheless, "strictly true," and Bushnell held that they are so, when once their pictorial and symbolic character is properly understood.

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[1] Published in 1866.

[2] Published in 1874.

[3] *Institutes*, I. 455.

Dr. Mulford advocates the view that "Christ redeemed the world by the realization of a perfect life, in the fulfilment of perfect righteousness, in oneness with humanity, and in the conflict with and the conquest of all the forces, by which humanity is alienated from God, and men are alienated from each other."[1] He discards all legal and forensic terms and analogies and defines redemption entirely as an ethical process. Christ achieved for us the perfect life; we are to achieve it in and with him. The authors whom he cites with approval as being those to whose thought his own is closest akin, are Athanasius, Oxenham, Rothe, Maurice, Campbell, and T. T. Munger.

According to Dr. W. N. Clarke, the work of Christ not only shows the love of God for sinners and his condemnation and hatred of sin, but reveals God as the great sin-bearer.[2] He bears the sin of the world on his holy and compassionate heart. This suffering is redemptive. It satisfies him better than the penal suffering of sinners would do, and it is more certainly saving in its effect upon them. Here, then, is a substitute for punishment which more adequately expresses God than penalties could do. "Love suffers in saving, and God bears in order that he may save" (p. 346). In his sufferings Christ "was subjecting himself, in such measure as human life allows, to such treatment as sin offers to God, and was showing forth the spirit in which God suffers that he may save" (p. 347). There is a cross in the eternal heart. "God is eternally satisfied with the suffering of love for sinners, and desires that it may take the place of all other suffering for sin" (p. 348). Here we find the real meaning of "propitiation." "Whatever exhibits God's righteousness, or rightness of character and conduct respecting sin, has the character of a propitiation" (p. 348). "God alone can set forth his righteousness in a full and satisfactory exhibition." "God's own sin-bearing satisfies God, and his exhibition of it in Christ completes his satisfaction" (p. 349).

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[1] *The Republic of God*, Boston, 1881, p. 181.

[2] *An Outline of Christian Theology*, pp. 340, 341.

It will be seen from this brief sketch that Dr. Clarke occupies essentially the same point of view as Dr. Bushnell, though he discards governmental language and analogies much more completely than Dr. Bushnell did. We do not read here, as in *The Vicarious Sacrifice*, about "law before government," "legal enforcements" and "God's rectoral honor." The terms of the discussion are more exclusively and warmly personal. The subject is concerned with God's ethical nature, not with a supposed governmental system. Dr. Bushnell still retained much of the governmental terminology current in his time; later exponents of substantially the same doctrine have aimed to conceive and interpret the work of Christ in terms of personal relation, to construe it not as satisfying, as it were from without, an official Deity, but as revealing and expressing the righteous and loving Father whom Christ declared that he had come to make known and to bring near to men.[1]

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[1] Other illustrations of this tendency and mode of thought may be found in Dr. George A. Gordon's *A New Epoch for Faith*, pp. 146–149; in President Henry C. King's *Reconstruction in Theology*, pp. 174, 175; in Archdeacon Wilson's Hulsean Lectures for 1898–1999, entitled *The Gospel of Atonement*, and in Professor B. P. Bowne's brochure, *The Atonement*. The same general view which has been sketched above is presented in the sermons of F. W. Robertson, Phillips Brooks, and T. T. Munger. The most elaborate recent presentation of the moral theory is contained in the Angus Lectures, entitled *The Christian Idea of Atonement*, by Principal T. Vincent Tymms. (Macmillan. London and New York, 1904.)

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

If, now, we leave aside the extinct patristic conception of a ransom paid to Satan, we may conclude from the foregoing review that five fairly distinct types of theory concerning the death of Christ have held, and still hold, the field in Christian thought: (1) The theory which conceives God as a private dignitary, offended by sin, to whom Christ makes reparation by the payment of his life (Anselm). (2) The theory which regards sin, not as an offence against the dignity of a private party, but as a breach of public law, and contemplates God as the administrator of that law, the inexorable magistrate who is bound to punish every sin with its full desert of penalty. Now, since God has chosen *not* to punish all sinners, he must express his wrath in the punishment of a substitute, — a rôle which Christ voluntarily assumes. This view (mingled, to some extent, with the elements of other views) is found in Luther, Calvin, and, especially, Melanchthon, and was carried out to its full logical consequences by the Lutheran and Calvinistic divines of the seventeenth century. (3) The theory which conceived the government of God as a kind of entity whose interests he must protect. In this view sin is, as in the preceding theory, a breach of public law, but God is a Governor, rather than a Judge; he has not simply to enforce the law, but may decide and regulate its application, even relaxing it, for sufficient reasons. He graciously chooses to withhold its penalties from repentant sinners, but in order to protect the dignity of his government and to attest the blameworthiness of sin, he makes a penal example of Christ. By this means he is able, consistently with the uprightness of his moral rule, to pardon sin (Grotius, the

Arminian theology and the New School or New England theology as represented by Edwards and his successors). Later theories are less definite and less sharply distinguishable, but we may note two general types, and therefore add: (4) an ethicized governmental view which no longer conceives God after the analogy of a political ruler, but contemplates him under the categories of fatherhood and holy love and regards the work of Christ as a satisfaction, not to a set of official demands, but to God's own inner, ethical life. When, now, it is contended that, from this point of view, there can be no satisfaction of God *ab extra*, that his satisfaction must be self-satisfaction in love, sacrifice, and sin-bearing, the step is taken (5) to the so-called "subjective" theory, according to which God satisfies himself by revealing and expressing his nature and realizing the gracious purpose of his holy love in salvation. It will thus be seen that the time between these last two interpretations is quite indefinite. The difference is more in the terms used than in any fundamental principle. Hence I am quite ready to admit that some of the writers whom I ranged under (4) might, perhaps, have been as appropriately included under (5), and *vice versa*.

What judgment, now, shall be passed upon these various theories? What estimate, for example, is the modern man likely to form of Anselm's interpretation of Christ's saving work? Dr. Denney's verdict is that "the *Cur Deus Homo* is the truest and greatest book on the atonement that has ever been written."[1] That which is held to justify this judgment is Anselm's "profound grasp" of the doctrine "that sin makes a real difference to God, and that even in forgiving, God treats that difference *as* real, and cannot do otherwise"; hence "the divine necessity for the atonement" in order that God may not "do himself an injustice, or be untrue to himself."[2] Dr. Moberly has passed quite a different judgment. He declares that Anselm's definition of sin[1] is so fatally defective as to vitiate his whole discussion. "It makes sin in its essence quantitative, and, as quantitative, external to the self of the sinner, and measurable, as if it had a self, in itself."[2] Hence he thinks there could hardly be a better example of a conspicuous failure to deal with the real question of salvation than this reparation-scheme of Anselm ; "nothing could be more simply arithmetical or more essentially unreal."[3]

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[1] *The Atonement and the Modern Mind*, p. 116.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 117. One can but wonder what the theories of salvation are which do *not* regard sin as making any difference to God, or in what

But not alone the value, but also the nature, of Anselm's theory, is in dispute. If Dr. Denney had found its unparalleled greatness in its parade of syllogisms and logical puzzles rather than in the truth of its underlying ideas, his dictum would have won, I think, a more general assent. Anselm's theory is popularly called "the commercial theory" because it so constantly uses the terms of quantity, payment, and equivalence. Dr. Moberly evidently regards it as the mathematical theory *par éminence*. It appears to me, however, to be, far more fundamentally, a feudal theory — an interpretation based on the ideas of mediæval chivalry. Sin is *læsa majestas* — an offence against the sacred person of the sovereign, and for this reason nothing but a great reparation can ever satisfy for it. Now the mathematical terms which are used to describe the greatness of this reparation and its equivalence to the demand are incidental and illustrative. I grant that there is a constant mixture of mathematical and chivalric terms, but I hold that the latter express Anselm's more essential and fundamental ideas. Sin is an enormous affront, a shocking insult to the heavenly Majesty; a single look contrary to his command would outweigh the value of the universe,

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respects other theories — the penal and governmental theories, for example — fall short of the greatness and truth of Anselm's view in this matter of magnifying sin. I find it difficult to imagine what the views and estimates of the history of this doctrine must be which could give rise to the opinion just quoted.

[1] "Sin is nothing else than not to render to God his due" (Bk. I. ch. ii.) ; that is, it is a robbery of God which necessitates repayment.

[2] *Atonement and Personality*, p. 370.

[3] p. 371 ; *cf.* p. 218.

including all created souls.[1] Anselm certainly does describe sin as huge, enormous, something that "makes a real difference to God." But does he describe it as it is? Does he show the true reasons why it "makes a real difference to God"? Does he display any marked appreciation of its essential unreasonableness, its real ethical character? Does he exhibit it as an offence against inherent right and truth? Does he portray its actual nature as selfishness or depict its effects in character and in society? Does he correlate the work of Christ in any real way with man's actual state in sin, and show, or make any effort to show, how his death effects a real salvation? I should answer that in all these respects Anselm's argumentation is as unreal and as irrelevant as the misleading analogy on which it is based, and as remote from the actual business of saving men as the mediæval scheme of satisfactions, imputations, and merit-treasuries of which it is a part. According to this theory, sin is high treason, not moral corruption; it is not a character; it remains outside the human conscience; it is, indeed, a great fault, but it is hardly a moral fault; it is sternly condemned, but not by holiness in God or conscience in man. There is in Anselm's "plan of salvation," as Dr. Candlish has pointed out,[2] no essential connection between Christ and the saved; whether mathematics or chivalry be the more fundamental to the theory, matters little; both are irrelevant. It would be difficult to name any prominent treatise on atonement whose conception of sin is so essentially unethical and superficial.

If, as Dr. Moberly justly claims, "the atonement is not to be conceived of as an external transaction, from which God returns, armed, by virtue of it, with a newly acquired right or faculty of 'not punishing' those whom he was 'obliged' to punish before,"[1] — then I am confident that not many persons in our time will find "evangelical repose" in Anselm's interpretation. No theory could be more purely "transactional." No saving value is attached to Christ's life, teaching, or deeds; in fact, all saving effect is denied to these, since he owed it to God to live a perfect life, and neither he nor we have any credit for that. It is only the supererogatory merit of his death that contributes anything toward our salvation, and this it does merely as a reparation for an insult to the offended majesty of Heaven. Moreover, the whole scheme is a purely speculative construction. I know of no important treatise on our subject which has so few points of contact with Scripture. Its whole structure is built up in practical independence of biblical materials, and, naturally enough, is incapable of harmonization either with the biblical doctrine of God or of man.

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[1] The idea assumed by Anselm and later asserted by those who held a modified Anselmic view (*e.g.* Edwards and Shedd), that a finite act (sin) becomes infinite when it is directed toward an infinite object, would seem to require no refutation. It is of a piece with Descartes' well-known view that our idea of an infinite Being (assumed to be itself infinite) requires an infinite Cause to explain its origin and presence in us. These notions are figments of mediæval metaphysics.

[2] *The Christian Salvation*, p. 44.

We have seen that, according to Anselm, the alleged necessity that sin be punished, or a heavy fine paid instead, is grounded in the honor or dignity of God. The course which God must take is dictated by his private feeling and not by considerations of public interest or principles of universal or necessary validity. Hence Anselm was powerless to show that this necessity was absolute, and he falls back upon fitness or propriety as the ground of God's action.[2] At this point he leaves the door open for the entrance of the idea of Duns Scotus that Christ's death satisfies God because he is pleased to accept it. The notion of God as a private dignitary gives rise to a conception of sin and of the necessity of satisfaction widely different (whether for better or for worse) from those underlying Protestant orthodoxy. The only reason why the arbitrary God of Anselm could not forgive without satisfaction was, that it would compromise his dignity. Socinus had but to substitute a differently disposed private Deity for Anselm's in order to show that he might waive the punishment of man's offence if he chose. This contention is all the more cogent in proportion as sin is regarded as being of the nature of a debt. It is vain to deny that a creditor may, if he wishes, release a debtor from the payment of a debt.[1]

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 275. [2] *Cf.* J. S. Candlish, *The Christian Salvation*, p. 44.

The Reformers deepened and ethicized the conception of God which underlies Anselm's reasoning. For them the work of Christ was grounded in the ethical nature of God, and was required by the supreme and absolute law of his being. They picture the atonement, not as a reparation for a private wrong, but as a satisfaction to inviolable holiness and a protection to the universal interests of the moral order. The whole subject was brought into the field of ethics. Anselm's doctrine was essentially non-ethical; the old Protestant doctrine was ethical, but it does not follow that the ethics which was applied to it was sound and tenable. We have seen that, as the theory was carried out, it defined justice as distributive or punitive — the absolute necessity and fixed determination to punish. Benevolence or mercy was described as a subordinate attribute, optional as to its exercise, and dependent (in Scotian fashion) on the divine will or disposition. But the penal principle was constitutive in the nature of God and gave the law to his will. Now, if punishment is, in any case, to be withheld from the sinner, it must be inflicted on his substitute. In point of fact, God determined to exempt the elect from punishment, and Christ volunteered to take upon himself the penalty of their sins. By this vicarious endurance of penalty justice is satisfied and forgiveness rendered possible and consistent.

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[1] Anselm's combination of heterogeneous elements gives rise to other questions which we have not space to consider. It has long been regarded as his great merit that the atonement which he describes was "objective," and it certainly is, if by that is meant "outside of us" and without relation to our ethical life. But there is a good deal in his contention that sin does not really affect God at all, and that nothing can be really conferred on him, to justify Principal Simon's opinion that Anselm's "conception of the influence or action of the work of Christ is *not* properly objective," but really "looks toward the cosmos as a whole," since the direct object of redemption is to fill the gap made by the fall of the angels. See *The Redemption of Man*, pp. 55–58.

The fact that, as our review has shown, this theory is obsolescent in the theological thought of to-day is the most conclusive evidence that it is intolerable to the modern mind and heart. Its case is going by default. Those who are strenuous for one or more of its favorite terms, such as substitution, are likely to be equally insistent that they hold no legal or forensic doctrine. As we have seen, the theory has been attenuated and modified out of all resemblance to its former shape.

Some of the difficulties which I find in the theory are these: (1) It cannot explain the genesis of redemption. If the antithesis which is made between justice and mercy exists in God, and if strict punitive justice must always be carried out, how can mercy make itself successfully heard, or win the day against the requirements of inexorable justice which demands the sinner's punishment? How, on the theory that holiness and justice are independent of love and superior to it, can a plan of grace for sinners ever arise? If punitive justice lies deeper than love in God, and is independent of it, and has its infinite energy of wrath excited against sin, how is it logically conceivable that an inferior, optional, and (in its relation to "holiness") dependent and non-determining attribute (love) should succeed in checking this punitive energy? The theory lays no logical basis in the nature of God for a work of salvation. It sacrifices the very motive to salvation in its effort to show how God surmounted the difficulty of making it possible. But let us waive this objection and suppose that somehow the secondary, dependent, and optional attribute, love, has induced God to save (some[1]) men. How can it be done in view of inflexible, punitive justice, which must always be exercised everywhere? Answer: It *is* exercised in the substitutionary punishment of the sins of the world (or of the elect) inflicted upon Christ. Here, then, is our second difficulty: (2) Can an innocent person be punished? Is not punishment correlative to guilt or blameworthiness? Is not the principle of distributive justice *suum cuique?* Is it conceivable that God should spend his punitive wrath upon his eternally holy Son? Can the sufferings to which a perfectly holy Being voluntarily submits properly be called penal? It is not, perhaps, impossible on the Grotian conception of "general," or "public," justice, to see how an innocent person may be "punished"; but on the principles of the theory in question, the statement seems self-contradictory and absurd. For justice, in this view, is distributive, avenging — the necessary infliction of penalty which flows from God's wrath against sin. How, then, can it flow forth from his wrath except upon the objects of his wrath? How can it flame forth upon an object of his complaisant love? Can God in his wrath punish the supreme object of his love? It is a *contradictio in adjecto.*

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[1] The Calvinistic theory permits us to speak of the salvation of men only with this parenthetical qualification. The doctrine to which we allude is succinctly expressed by the Calvinistic revival preacher, George Whitefield, thus: "I frankly acknowledge that I believe the doctrine of reprobation, that God intends to give saving grace, through Jesus Christ, only to a certain number, and that the rest of mankind, after the fall of Adam, being justly left by God to continue in sin, will at last suffer that eternal death which is its proper wages. . . . Our Lord knew for whom he died. There was an eternal compact between Father and Son. A cer-

But to return to the initial definitions of the theory. After they have been laid down, I experience this difficulty in following the explanation: (3) If punitive justice is primary in God and independent of love, and if love is secondary and inferior, why does not justice have its way with sinful men? Grant now the answer, "It does have its way in the penal inflictions which were visited upon Christ." Waive all difficulties connected with this answer and merely ask, "What led Christ to bear these penalties?" The only possible answer is, "Love." Then love is, after all, really supreme and triumphant. God averts justice from sinful man only by means of his love, which triumphs over justice, or at least prevails in the

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tain number (of souls) was then given to him as the purchase and reward of his obedience and death. For these he prayed, and not for the world. For these, and these only, he is now interceding, and with their salvation he will be fully satisfied."

divine counsels respecting the treatment of sinful men. If it be said (and this is what the theory comes to) that God avenges himself upon himself in the person of the eternal Son, it is still love for man which, supreme and eternal in the divine Being, devises and executes this plan of sovereign mercy. It is quite certain, then, on the theory's own showing, that if love were really optional as to its exercise and if God had chosen not to exercise it, no salvation for man would have been possible. But if we grant that God might have decided *not* to save men, the question for this theory to answer is : Does not the fact that he *does* save them prove that love is at least as fundamental and constitutive in his nature as is the appetite for punishment? I cannot but regard it as fatal to the post-Reformation dogma that it gives no logical ground in the being of God for the work of atoning love, imperils the divine essence in a war within itself,[1] and gives no better reason why the feebler principle prevails over the stronger than that God within the realm of his own being expends his wrath upon himself, a proceeding to which, if it were not inherently absurd, he could have been animated only by love.

A further difficulty is this : (4) We have seen that the theory is compelled to resort to God's love in order to explain the genesis of redemption ; Christ is *graciously* substituted for us in punishment. Now my question is, whether the definitions given by the theory really leave room for this act of grace.[2] We are told that God *must* exercise (punitive) justice always and everywhere. How, then, is there any option left him as to the exercise of mercy? On the theory under review justice and mercy are opposites. Now if God *must* punish, how can you say that he *may* forgive, that is, *not punish?* If retributive justice is always exercised *everywhere* (as Drs. Shedd and

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[1] Of the conception that it was the office of Christ to reconcile the hostile attributes of God and to make peace and unity in God himself (see p. 179), Sabatier says, "On appelait cela de la haute metaphysique ; c'était pure mythologie." *Expiation*, p. 100.

[2] On this point see Dr. Robinson's statement quoted on p. 176.

Strong assert), then mercy cannot be exercised *anywhere.* All forgiveness involves a relaxation of the strict law of retribution.

Another objection to the theory is as follows: (5) Its definition of the divine love and of its relation to the divine nature mars the conception of God's moral excellence. It is said, for example: "As we *may be* kind, but *must be* righteous, so God *may be* merciful, but *must be* holy."[1] This proposition suggests such questions as these: Are not men under *moral obligation* to be kind? Is the moral obligation to be righteous higher or different from the obligation to exercise love? Is God under no obligation to be kind or merciful? Would he be as excellent a Being as we believe him to be, if he were not kind, or if he were non-kind or unkind? Are not kindness, mercy, and benevolence elements of moral perfection, and must not God be morally perfect? If, in point of fact, God were not benevolent and acted solely in naked, retributive justice, would he be as excellent a Being as he is? Think away benevolence from God; would you have left the Heavenly Father in whom Jesus taught us to believe? If so, then love and grace must be activities of mere caprice, not required by God's ethical nature, and therefore without moral excellence. If it is optional with God *not* to love, then he might (conceivably) be God, that is, the perfect Being, without love; that is, love is not necessary to moral perfection.[2]

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[1] Strong, *Philosophy and Religion*, p. 196. It seems almost unnecessary to point out how unscriptural is this author's definition of holiness which makes it synonymous with retributive justice and so places it in contrast and rivalry to mercy and love. "When applied to Jehovah," says Dr. Davidson, "the word *holiness* may express any attribute in him whereby he manifests himself to be God, or anything about him which is what we should name *Divine*; and hence the name 'Holy' or 'Holy One' became the loftiest expression for Jehovah as God, or it expressed God especially on the side of his majesty." *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 253. Between this conception and the definition of holiness as the unconditional necessity to punish, the gulf is deep and wide.

[2] How radically unscriptural these *a priori* definitions of the divine character are, may be seen by reference to any competent modern exe-

But let us take the illustration into human relations, as, indeed, we are invited to do: "A man *may be* kind, but *must be* righteous." Suppose a man is not kind, is he the sort of man he *ought* to be? Is he as excellent as he would be if he were kind? Is benevolence no essential constituent in human perfection? What would be thought of a man who maintained that he was at liberty, at will, to love his fellow-men or not? The character of the strictly and merely "just" Shylock who felt that it was optional with him whether he should be kind or merciful, and who chose *not* to be so, has not been generally admired.

A further objection to the theory in question is, (6) that, in subordinating love to retributive justice in the nature of God, it makes a rational doctrine of substitution impossible. A substitution which is to have any meaning or value for salvation must be an ethical affair and can spring only from love. Mere retributive justice cannot give rise to a substitution, nor can it be satisfied with one. It will "have its pound," and nothing else. The only substitution which is compatible with this conception is the mechanical and inequitable infliction of so much suffering on the innocent for so much sin in the guilty. But such a substitution, even if possible, is as irrelevant as it is immoral. The only vicariousness which has any significance in human life or relations is a quality or activity of love. Mere penal righteousness of which love is

gete. Fuller proof of this will be given later. It may be well, however, to summon at this point a single witness. *Apropos* of our subject Dr. Davidson, summarizing the Old Testament doctrine of God, writes: "That which is moral includes mercy and love and compassion and goodness, with all that these lead to, not less than rectitude and justice." "God's love is the highest expression of his ethical being, the synthesis and focus of all his moral attributes." "When Moses asked to see Jehovah's *glory*, he replied that he would 'make all his goodness to pass before him'; and he proclaimed his name, 'The Lord merciful and gracious' (Ex. xxxiv. 6). The glory of God is his goodness, and his goodness is his blessedness. He is glorified when by revealing his goodness he attracts men unto himself, and his own goodness is reproduced in them, and they are created anew in his image; for to be that is blessedness." *Theology of the Old Testament*, pp. 161, 171, 174.

"independent" can neither accomplish nor permit any such substitution.

For reasons like these I cannot help feeling that there is something erroneous in the initial definitions on which the dogma of atonement in seventeenth-century Protestantism rests. When wrought out to its logical issue, it seems to me to be contrary to fact in logically excluding salvation altogether, contrary to experience in teaching that benevolence is no necessary part of goodness, contrary to reason in breaking up the unity of the moral nature of God, and contrary to morality in holding that God is so "just" that he cannot forgive the guilty, but so unjust that he can punish the innocent. Logically carried out, it makes God a strict accountant who is, indeed, strictly "just," but is also nothing more. This result does not seem to me to coincide with the Christian concept of God.

But, happily, the theory has seldom been logically carried out. We have seen that the Reformers only approximated its logical consequences. With them the theory of atonement was a corollary of the doctrine of justification, and while in the exposition of both they freely employed the legal terminology of Paul, they did not, any more than the apostle, explain the process of salvation wholly in forensic terms. Still, it seems to me that they never correlated justification and sanctification in any vital and adequate way, and that there was a corresponding *hiatus* left between their objective satisfaction and ethical union with Christ. Atonement, on the one hand, and justification, on the other, were rather preliminaries to salvation. They were processes which had no clear relation to man's actual recovery to holiness. The righteousness to which they entitled the sinner was an imputed righteousness, the merit of another. Neither atonement nor justification, in themselves considered, affected the character; by them the sinner was merely reckoned as righteous. So "objective" were these processes that the way was left open to the conclusion that man must be allowed to have no contact or connection with them of any sort. This idea later Protestantism carried out to the point of denying that faith is reckoned for righteousness, lest it should be supposed that man's act — even his act of trust and acceptance — had some part in procuring his salvation.[1] This example only shows to what lengths the forensic theology was driven in its well-meant, but mistaken, zeal to show that man is saved by an apparatus of satisfaction and imputation wholly "outside of" him. It involved the seventeenth-century dogmatics in the most explicit denial of the Pauline doctrine of the imputation of faith.[2]

It should be understood, then, that in characterizing the penal theory I have had more directly in mind the exaggerations of the Reformed doctrine which were developed in the seventeenth century and which, arrogating to themselves the official character of orthodoxy, have ever since maintained a wide vogue and influence, but which now at length, like the outworn Jewish system, are becoming obsolete and antiquated and are on the point of disappearing (Heb. viii. 13). It is true that this theory has been intrenched in the old Protestant creeds and has, so far, a certain right to the claim that it is the orthodox Protestant doctrine. Still, it has been, at no period, entirely unchallenged; it has had its rivals and its critics, until now, at last, there is scarcely a reputable theologian anywhere who ventures to come forward in its defence. As we have seen, those who still speak its language do so with frequent qualifiers: "as it were," "so far as," and "in a sense"; and the stoutest recent defender of substitution and propitiation will not allow that he holds any legal or forensic theory.

It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that the penal theory is a provincialism in Christian theology. It appears but sporadically in the patristic period ; it has no real standing in the principles of Anselm or of the mediæval Church ; its characteristic extravagances were repudiated by Grotius, by the Arminian theology the world over, and even by the new school Calvinism of America. In the English Church it has had no considerable foothold in recent times. It is derived from Luther and Calvin only by a one-sided interpretation. I cannot find that they ever defined love in God as secondary and subordinate to retributive justice, or taught that his mercy was an attribute which was not constitutive in his nature. So far as I can ascertain, Ritschl is quite correct in denying that the great Reformers ever held these monstrous conceptions. They — *et id omne genus* — are, I repeat, provincial extravagances and have no right to the name of orthodoxy in the comprehensive use of that term. They belong to the era of Protestant polemic scholasticism which elaborated the doctrines of a dictated and formally infallible Bible, unconditional election, limited atonement, and total depravity, and, it is encouraging to observe, are fast passing into the oblivion which has overtaken their theological kindred.

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[1] Hence we read, for example, in the Westminster Confession (ch. xi.) that God justifies men "not by imputing faith itself . . . as their righteousness," etc. When, afterwards, the proof-texts were inserted to support the doctrines propounded, the one which was put in to illustrate this assertion was Rom. iv. 5, "*His faith is counted for righteousness*," and, of course, several others which as flatly contradict the assertion made in the article might have been added.

[2] See Rom. iv. 3, 5, 9, 10, 22; Gal. iii. 6. *Cf.* Jas. ii. 23.

We have seen that Grotius diverged from Anselm in his conception of God. According to him God was not an offended party, but the administrator of a moral system. For him the problem of atonement was, not how God should obtain reparation for a personal injury — a robbery which was also an insult — but how he should safeguard the interests of his government. This was certainly an advance on the Anselmic view. It defined God, not in terms of feudal chivalry, but in terms of moral supervision and control ; God is conceived in his worldwide relations and his action is dictated by considerations affecting the well-being of the universe. I think that the gravity of sin is not less emphasized by Grotius than by Anselm, although it is true that he does not so constantly describe it in terms of bulk and avoirdupois. For him as for Anselm it is sin which compels the Almighty to subject his Son to the most bitter tortures in order that his condemnation of it may be asserted and displayed; only Grotius does not conceive this tragedy as necessitated by the "code of honor," the necessity of squaring accounts with offended dignity, but as necessary to an *ἔνδειξις τῆς δικαιοσύνης θεοῦ* — a tribute to the inviolability of the moral order and a deterrent to all future disobedience. I cannot comprehend how any one could study Anselm and Grotius side by side and not feel the incomparable ethical superiority of the latter.

But, however this may be, both Anselm and Grotius are equidistant from the penal satisfaction dogma. In the one case Christ's death is a work of supererogation — a voluntary act of homage to the offended majesty of God; in the other it is an act of deference to the exigencies of government, substituted for the punishment of offenders, which vindicates God's righteousness as effectively as punishment would have done. In neither case is retributive justice conceived as the primary attribute and love as a secondary and optional attribute of God; in neither case is it held that the necessity to punish is Heaven's first law. Hence, as has been shown, there is in both a touch of the "heresy" of *acceptatio*. The exclusion of this idea is the primary task of the penal view; but, as we have seen, it has not proved an easy one. We have noted this dreaded error lurking on the borders of Dr. Crawford's and Dr. Hodge's explanations. To show that God accepted nothing short of full payment; that in the "plan of salvation" he compromised by no jot or tittle the requirements of strict retribution; that the death of Christ was regarded as the equivalent of the world's (or the elect's) punishment because it *was* equivalent; that there could be no forgiveness until the precise *quantum* of penalty due had been weighed out, — this, I say, has not been found easy. And even when all concession, compromise, or relaxation were excluded from the doctrine of the cross, they are seen to have crept in antecedently as furnishing a motive to Christ's death — an explanation of the possibility of a *gracious* substitution of Christ's "equivalent punishment" for ours. Thus at some point the principle, "Retributive justice must be and always is exercised everywhere," breaks down. Its refutation was never better put than by Augustine: "Would the Father have delivered up his Son for us *if he had not been already appeased?* I see that the Father loved us before the Son died for us."[1] The fact of salvation rests on the primacy of love in God.

It may be well to summarize the defects of the theory of Grotius. They are, in my judgment: (1) An unwarranted use of political analogies in his doctrine of God and of his government. His Deity wears an official, magisterial cast and his acts and motives are too much conceived on the analogy of human political organizations. The "moral government" of God is conceived as a kind of objective reality with which God himself stands in relation and for whose exigencies he must provide. (2) A too statutory conception of the divine law. (3) An indefinite and unclear view of the relation of justice to the divine will and nature and a deficient consideration of the relations of justice and benevolence. (4) The haziness of the idea of a "penal example." Is the conception of an official suffering in our stead in order to honor God's government much easier or more acceptable than an official punishment in our stead? And what, in any case, is the meaning of satisfying God's government by official suffering as an example? The proceeding seems arbitrary and ineffective in any meaning which I can attach to such terms. It has commonly been felt, I think, by those who, in general, have followed in the wake of Grotius that he had failed to grasp the deeper ethical questions involved; hence the efforts of his successors to show how the work of Christ satisfied, not the "moral government" of God, but God himself, by both revealing his grace and vindicating his righteousness. But this, at least, may be said for the theory of Grotius: it was capable of adjustment, by modification, to the requirements of modern thought and of harmonization with the Christian ideas of God and of his relations to the world, and this is more than can be truthfully said of Anselm's theory or of the penal satisfaction dogma.

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[1] *On the Trinity*, Bk. XIII. ch. xi.

The ethical satisfaction theories are praiseworthy attempts so to revise the doctrine of propitiation in its legal forms and so to connect the whole work of Christ with the actual life of man as to show that his sufferings and death were not merely a condition precedent, but an actual power of salvation. Those who have wrought out these theories have felt that there was a truth underlying the penal view which must be conserved and magnified, namely, that Christ's work, and specifically his death, was in some way a solemn, supreme testimony to the guilt of sin — that in his sufferings we are to behold revealed both the goodness and the severity of God. These writers have, indeed, broken with the penal theory. They emphatically deny that Christ was punished, that our guilt was imputed to him, that we are saved by an imputation of his merit, and that any equivalence is to be predicated between his sufferings and man's punishment. They deny that God was appeased, induced, or made willing, by Christ's sufferings, to forgive sin. They hold that love is primary in God, but that the divine love is no mere good nature. It includes righteousness, as well as benevolence, and both must be expressed and satisfied in the work of salvation. They deny that justice must first be satisfied in order that mercy may operate, but hold that both must be revealed together, since both are equally constitutive elements in the nature of God. These writers repudiate the narrow definition of justice as *quid pro quo* retribution, and hence deny that God must first punish sin before he can forgive it. They conceive justice as that quality in God which compels him to disapprove and condemn sin — the self-preservative element in his nature — the self-respect of perfect love. They deny, however, that punitive, retributive justice must be exercised always and everywhere ; in that case no salvation were possible at all.

These writers retain more or less of the terminology of the historical theories ; for example, propitiation, reconciliation, and satisfaction. But, in general, these terms receive a modified meaning. The interpretations vary and, in many cases, are not very clear and definite. Frequently the reconciliation of God to us is stated to consist in the fact that the atonement has an "objective aspect" or a "Godward bearing," or that Christ submitted to some requirement of the divine order, thereby attesting God's displeasure at sin, and so satisfying him. In other cases it is held that God is satisfied by self-expression, and little or no effort is made to show how he could, in any sense, be acted upon by a mediator or a representative of mankind. In such cases, of course, the "subjective" theories are approximated. In most of these mediating efforts there is seen a strong determination to hold fast to Paul's juristic texts, though it may be questioned whether they are always taken in their full force. There is evidently an instinctive feeling that it is more seemly to cling to a questionable interpretation of Paul than to appear to part company with him at any point. One must be Pauline enough to continue the use of his legal terminology, even if it is filled with new content and put to new uses. Some writers of this class — and this is quite as true of the modified penal theorists — remind one of the citizen who is in favor of the law, but against its enforcement; they are in favor even of Paul's inheritance from late Judaism, but are not strenuous in its application.

The theories in question are often careful to insist that they, in contrast to "moral influence" views, are "objective." I shall give some reasons for thinking that there is, in this connection, a good deal of word-jugglery with these terms "objective" and "subjective." I shall attempt to show, if I may express myself so paradoxically, that there are no "subjective" theories of salvation, and that the theories which seek the cover of the word "objective" are *not* objective. Of course my meaning is that each type of theory has, in fact, both a subjective and an objective aspect; in short, that, in this respect, there is no generic distinction between them. One is tempted to say that these terms are controversial weapons — words to conjure with, like so many labels of indefinite import but ominous suggestion in theology. Their use reminds one of the current methods of refuting certain forms of philosophic thought by characterizing them as "mere subjective idealism." I have been interested to hear Professor Paulsen say what I had long suspected, that there never was any such thing: "No normal mind, and perhaps no abnormal one either, ever, even for a moment, doubted the existence of a world independent of his own ideas."[1] Merely "subjective" theories of the work of Christ really exist where "solipsism" does, in the subjectivity of their opponents and critics. That is the only proper sense in which they are "subjective."

I observe that Dr. Moberly has adverted to this same point. He says: "In truth the very antithesis (of subjective and objective) is, on examination, artificial and unreal. For here, as elsewhere, the words 'subjective' and 'objective' are only relatively, not really opposed. So far is either of them from really denying, that each in fact implies and presupposes the other; nor can either of the two, in complete isolation from the other, be itself ultimately real. . . . Thus those who plead for an objective atonement are right — but would not be right, if its objective reality could be irrespective of realization subjectively."[2] As to Dr. Moberly's own theory, he claims, of course, that it recognizes the objective or Godward reference of the work of Christ, but he says that he is asking people "to believe in the work of Christ's passion as a real transformation of themselves, as finding its climax in the real climax of themselves. So far it may truly be said that we are demurring to a purely objective theory of atonement. Atonement cannot be described, or accounted for, simply as a transaction, external to the selves who are atoned for. In themselves is its ultimate significance. In themselves is its ultimate reality. Nor can they themselves be ultimately realized any other wise save through it" (p. 319). But how perfectly obvious it is that this is a conception which the representatives of the old theology would stigmatize as a "purely subjective," "mere moral influence theory," utterly lacking in the truth and value of a satisfaction wrought wholly "outside of us."

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[1] *Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 352.

[2] *Atonement and Personality*, pp. 140, 141.

The terms "subjective" and "objective," as used in application to our subject, are in sore need of definition. Let us note one or two further illustrations of this need. In his excellent discussion of atonement, Professor H. C. Sheldon refers to Dr. Bushnell's theory (as presented in *The Vicarious Sacrifice*) as a "subjective theory," and in contrast claims for his own a "Godward bearing," an objective element. This element Bushnell "repudiates." Let us see. What is the objective element in Dr. Sheldon's view? It is the revelation, in Christ's work, of God's "self-consistent disposition," of the perfect harmony of his attributes; it is the maintenance of "the balance or conditioning interrelation of the divine perfections"; it is at once "a manifestation of immeasurable love, and a sanction to moral order or a testimony to the supreme value and necessity of righteousness." This "latter element" is the specifically "objective element." It is the "background of holiness" on which is set the manifestation of love, so that God is revealed and operative in the work of Christ in "the totality of his ethical nature, or in entire consistency with himself." "The above," says Dr. Sheldon, "amounts to a definition of the objective element of the atonement."[1] These seem to me to be very admirable statements; but does Dr. Sheldon mean to say that Bushnell "repudiated" the objective element of Christ's work as he himself has defined it? I have read him to no purpose if such is the case. The passages already cited (p. 235 *sq.*) from *God in Christ* and *The Vicarious Sacrifice* show how firmly he held (to quote again his own words) that it is a very "great mistake" so to "magnify even the love of the cross" as not to include "the righteous rule of God."[2] It is true that Dr. Bushnell denied that

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[1] *System of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 402–404.

[2] *Vicarious Sacrifice*, p. 171.

Christ's work was "Godward" in the sense of "giving God an incentive to be gracious"; but these are the very words in which Dr. Sheldon expresses his agreement at that point with Dr. Bushnell. Over and over again in each of his writings on the subject Dr. Bushnell affirmed as much as Dr. Sheldon asserts when he says, "There is an objective element in the atonement, namely, that feature of Christ's work which meets the demand that the claims of divine holiness or righteousness should be signally expressed along with the supreme manifestation of God's love."[1] But, of course, the old theories meant much more than this in asserting the objective bearing of Christ's death. In the forum of historic orthodoxy Dr. Sheldon's views would fall under the same condemnation as Dr. Bushnell's as "purely subjective theories." In the interest of clearness "subjective" and "objective," as applied in discussions of atonement, should either be defined or disused.

Another illustration, which I must forbear to present in detail, is found in Dr. David Somerville's exposition, in which the "objective element" is said to consist in Christ's "rendering to God in our name that obedience to his will which we had no power in ourselves to render;" as "furnishing, by what he did, the conditions that had, in the nature of things, to be present before the eternal love of God could be seen to be what it is, or could be believed in aright by us." But we must beware of the "error of regarding him as a vindictive God whose wrath has to be appeased before he can look with favor on the human race."[2] But the idea of a "vindictive God" who requires to be propitiated, appeased, and so reconciled to us, represents precisely the historical meaning of the "objective" or "Godward" bearing of Christ's sufferings and death. Moreover, Dr. Somerville seems to me to betray the feeling that the objective element which he admits scarcely measures up to Paul's idea of reconciliation on its divine side.

[1] *System*, pp. 410, 411.

[2] *St. Paul's Conception of Christ*, pp. 90–93.

If "objective" were used to express the notion that the work of Christ changed the disposition or feeling or attitude of God toward men, and so reconciled him to us, that would be clear; but when it is so weakened as to stand for the idea that in Christ God expressed his righteousness as well as his benevolence, or when, as often, it assumes the thought-concealing function of telling us that it designates one aspect of a "new relation" of God to the world, then we must say of it that it expresses, in the one case, what all theories maintain, and that, in the other, it is too vague and meaningless to serve any useful purpose.[1]

Now, whatever be one's personal opinions on the general subject which we have been reviewing, one conclusion is absolutely evident: the theories which are kindred to the thoughts of such men as Anselm, Melanchthon, Turretin, and even Grotius — the interpretations of the work of Christ in mathematical, legal, and official analogies — are obsolescent. One may deem this a calamity, but he cannot deny that it is a fact. These theories are, doubtless, strongly intrenched in popular thought and are eagerly cherished by old school theologians; but, with slight qualifications, it may be said that they have no defenders. They are more or less championed in periodicals which are designed and adapted to promote the unquestioning popular acceptance of dogmatic tradition; but in the literature of investigation, in the theological monographs and doctrinal systems which are attracting attention and exercising widespread influence to-day, these theories find, practically, no place. Some of the most conservative scholars are awakening to the fact that, without important qualification, the theories which have prevailed in the past cannot hope for acceptance from the modern mind, and have even made cautious suggestions — not infrequently availing themselves of a truly diplomatic indefiniteness — respecting their adaptation. The task of accomplishing this adjustment is great, and who is sufficient for it? It must be the age-long labor of many minds; but one thing seems clear: it will require a careful reconsideration of those "previous questions" with which the doctrine of salvation is so vitally connected; namely: How are we to conceive the ethical nature of God? What were the aim and method of our Lord's mission? and, What is the relation in which he stands to our human history and destiny?

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[1] It is common, in controversy, to describe all efforts to interpret the work of Christ in terms of ethical or personal relations as "moral influence theories" whose principle is represented as being that God makes a display of his love in order to induce men to repent. This representation is of a piece with that which describes moral views as "purely subjective" or as advocating redemption by "mere example." The counterpart of this contention would be that many human parents hold that the best way to secure obedience in their children is to make an exhibit, from time to time, of their love to them and, upon occasion, to pose before them as moral models. But even this controversial caricature of the moral view will compare favorably with the theories of equivalent payment, penal example, and vicarious punishment. What the moral view really is may be learned from the following description of it by Professor Bowne: "God has revealed himself in his Son as our Father, as bearing us upon his heart, and as supremely desirous of saving us from the sinful life which must end in death if persisted in, and recovering us to righteousness and the filial spirit. For this the Divine Son has given himself; for this the Holy Spirit came and comes; and the work of both the Son and the Spirit roots in the Father's love. But in all this the aim is not to satisfy the demands of justice, nor yet to save men from penalty, but to save men from sinning, to lift them Godward, and to bring them to that spiritual attitude which will make it possible for God to bestow himself upon them in infinite and eternal blessing. It is not a problem in forensic technicalities, but in spiritual dynamics." *The Atonement*, pp. 116, 117.

PART III

CONSTRUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOCTRINE

CHAPTER I

THE CHRISTIAN CONCEPT OF GOD

WE have already had frequent occasion to observe how largely men's conception of the nature and conditions of salvation is determined by their view of the moral character of God. The more primitive peoples, who have conceived of their gods as fickle and revengeful, have imagined that they could placate them or purchase their favor by costly sacrificial gifts. Similar conceptions may have been more or less associated even with Jewish offerings. In early Christianity, when a crude dualism prevailed, salvation could be regarded as achieved for man by a ruse or plot by which the Almighty outwitted the devil. For Anselm the problem was how to pay a sufficient homage to God's dignity which had been offended by sin ; for Grotius, how adequately to safeguard the interests of his moral government. The advocates of penal satisfaction believed in a God who must punish sin ; on what terms, then, could he forgive it, was their question. The Scotists and Socinians held that God could save men on such conditions as pleased him ; why, then, had he chosen so tragic a method? Every theory of atonement has, explicitly or implicitly, its own particular theory of the ethical nature of God.

This fact is a sufficient reason for our placing in the forefront of our constructive discussion the question : What is the Christian conception of the ethical nature of God? But we cannot even raise this question without raising others along with it, for example : Is there any such thing as a specifically Christian concept of God? and, Where is it to be sought and obtained? Do not the variations of view among Christian thinkers respecting the nature and policy of God show that the whole subject is in hopeless confusion? It may be granted that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to deduce from the differing theories which we have reviewed a definite and consistent notion of God; it is not quite easy to believe that all the great theorizers are trying to describe the same Being.

But one thing is clear, if there is no specifically Christian concept of God which can be ascertained and fairly well defined, then our task is utterly vain. The revolt of our time against the older theories of atonement is the result of the conviction that they were not developed from the Christian conception, or, at any rate, were only derived from it by a one-sided and exaggerated application of some of its elements. This is, at bottom, the one indictment which our age brings against the earlier forms of speculation; they are not adequately Christian. There is no hope for the efforts of present-day thinkers and students if they cannot improve upon the work of earlier times in precisely this respect. I venture to say that no moderns are likely to come forward who can argue more acutely than Anselm and Grotius and Turretin. We shall improve on their views only in case we start with truer presuppositions, — only in case we build on a truer conception of God.

By the Christian conception of God I understand, primarily, Christ's own conception. Now, not one of the historic theories ever stopped to inquire what this was, or made any effort to correlate its doctrine of salvation in any direct or specific way with Christ's own consciousness and concept of God. But this is the primary requirement for a Christian doctrine of salvation. We may fail in our effort to accomplish this task, but if we do not make the effort, we have failed already.

We find, of course, in the teaching of Jesus no abstract statement or ready-made definition of the nature of God, such as theologians undertake. Jesus did not discuss the "attributes" of God, but he did what is far more illuminating: he revealed and interpreted God to men; he described in terms that men could understand how God feels and acts; he bade men see God in his own life and person. If there is any other source for the Christian knowledge of God comparable with this disclosure of him, then the great central conviction of Jesus was an illusion. He dared to say that no man knew the Father except him to whom the Son revealed him. He certainly claimed to have made a clearer and more adequate disclosure of God's nature, will, and relations to mankind than had been made before or elsewhere. This he claimed to do in his teaching, his life, and his character. Now I should say that in Jesus' revelation of God two points stand out in clear relief: (1) that for him the term "Father" best expressed God's nature and relation to men, and (2) that he made the quality of mercy or grace primary in the character and action of God.

What did Jesus mean by the fatherhood of God? We must find the answer in the connections of thought in which he has set the idea. He required men to be complete, not narrow and grudging, in love, in order that they might be like their Father (Mt. v. 48); they must love all men, even their enemies, if they would be the sons of their Father, that is, be morally kindred to him (Mt. v. 45). He grounds the requirement of equity and fraternity in the fatherhood of God (Mt. xxiii. 9). Men must forgive, that their Father may forgive them (Mk. xi. 25). The Father is generous and bountiful even to the evil and unthankful, sending his rain upon all (Mt. v. 45). The attitude and action of the earthly father in the parable of the Lost Son are intended to describe God's feeling toward the sinful sons of men. These are examples. The term "Father" as applied to God carries with it all the meaning which the human analogy is adapted to suggest. It is an idealization of the love, care, and solicitude which constitute the very soul and meaning of human parenthood. If human parents are willing and eager to give good gifts to their children, the Father in heaven is yet more willing to give the blessings of his grace to all who desire them (Mt. vii. 11). Fatherhood is thus seen to be a synonym of love. This usage is what the Old Testament would lead us to expect. There God is Father to Israel, his beloved son, the chosen object of his care and favor. In his fatherly love he called his son, Israel, out of Egypt (Hos. xi. 1). It is the part of paternal compassion that he has mercy upon Ephraim, for whom, as his dear son, his heart is stirred with tender feeling (Jer. xxxi. 20). Sympathy, pity, brooding care and love — these are the characteristics of fatherhood in the Old Testament and in the teaching of Jesus. The principal difference is that in the Old Testament the fatherly relation of God is chiefly limited to Israel, while in the teaching of Jesus it is universalized.

The second point is that Jesus magnified the grace of God, placing it in the very forefront of his teaching. He grounded his own mission in that mercy. It was the pitying love of God which sent him into the world. The fullest apology for his life work as the Seeker and Saviour of the lost is found in that series of parables in which he describes the shepherd searching for the lost sheep, the woman sweeping the house for the one lost coin, the father waiting and watching for the wandering son's return. The compassionate love of God who does not desire that any should perish, — that is the reason why Jesus is in our world. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. And yet, there is a theology which tells us that mercy is a secondary attribute of God, that punitive justice[1] is his primary characteristic, and that there is no forgiveness with him until he has first punished. This view may derive some support from late

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[1] Perhaps it may be well to explain that for convenience I use the terms "punitive" and "penal" righteousness in the sense of avenging or compensatory justice. It would require the constant employment of circumlocution to avoid this long-established use of the words in question. I do not mean, however, by such an accommodation to give my assent to the theory of punishment which underlies this use of the words (*cf.* Part III. ch. iv.).

Jewish speculation and from the heathen classics, but it is the virtual negation of Christ's message.

But has Jesus nothing to say of the law and penalty side of God's nature? Does he, too, fall under the charge of sickly sentimentalism which theology has been prompt to prefer against the doctrine of the primacy of love in God? Is he then "mere benevolence," "easy good nature"? Are there no "terrors of the law"? Is there no wrath in God? It must be admitted that the teaching of Jesus falls short of the customary requirements of orthodox theology in this respect. He seldom spoke of the wrath, or even of the righteousness, of God.[1] He did not dwell, prominently, upon the law and penalty side of his being. He spoke of the law, but said that love was the ethical substance of it. He represented God as gracious, predisposed to forgive, willing in advance to bestow his good gifts. He never spoke of any wrath that had to be first expended or of any retaliatory justice which created an obstacle to the operation of his grace. He never hinted that God must be satisfied by sacrifice or propitiated by suffering before he was at liberty to forgive sins. On the contrary, he proclaimed a ready and waiting forgiveness; nay, over and over again, he declared the *fact* of forgiveness; "thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace." It is not strange that theology has found this teaching deficient. Its premisses are not here. This is, indeed, stated or acknowledged only in cautious and roundabout ways. Some tell us that we could not expect an adequate doctrine of salvation from Jesus; it would have been premature; for that we must look to later thought where the premisses needed for our theological theories may be found. Some make bold to declare that Jesus did not, in any case, come to preach the gospel;[1] and, of course, we are not to seek to learn the "plan of salvation" from him. In these ways theology betrays its consciousness of how little it has in common, at this point, with the teaching of Jesus himself. In this it is certainly quite correct.

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[1] I do not forget that the phrase δικαιοσύνη αὐτοῦ (*i.e.* θεοῦ) occurs in Mt. vi. 33, but the phrase does not there designate an attribute of God, to say nothing of "retributive righteousness." The word ὀργή (*sc.* θεοῦ) is once put into the mouth of Jesus (Lk. xxi. 23. The word is not found in the parallel accounts, Mk. xiii., Mt. xxiv.). It is synonymous with the woes and tribulations which are to befall the Jewish people at the destruction of their sacred city. It is the day of God's vengeance upon the nation for its sins. The "wrath" expresses itself in temporal calamity; its effect is seen in one of the great judgments of history. This passage constitutes an apparent, rather than a real, exception to the statement made in the text. But, in any case, this is the formal exception.

But is the God whom Jesus knows and reveals mere indulgent good nature, who does not "deal seriously" with sin? It is frequently suggested in books of theology that we are in imminent danger from this alarming error. A flood of sentimentalism, we are told, is sweeping us from our moorings to inviolable law and retributive righteousness; theories of salvation are abroad which take no serious view of sin. I have not observed the evidence of this peril. I have never read any Christian theologian on the work of Christ who himself makes light of sin, or who thinks that Jesus lightly estimated it, or who doubts that God is inviolably holy and must forever repudiate and condemn all moral evil. I am strongly inclined to believe that the real cause of these frequent cries of alarm is the collapse of theories which men are trying in desperation to support. They mistake the downfall of the platform on which they are standing for "the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds." But their alarms are misplaced; the foundation of God standeth sure.[2]

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[1] See p. 194. The writers of the Gospels, however, state the contrary. Mark sets in the forefront of Jesus' ministry his coming into Galilee "preaching the gospel of God," in which he bade men believe (i. 14, 15), and Luke relates that Jesus solemnly announced that to "preach the gospel to the poor" was a part of the work for which he was anointed (iv. 18). According to the same evangelist he was "preaching the gospel" in the temple (xx. 1) when the priests and scribes challenged his authority.

[2] "We avoid saying that Christ purchased pardon for us by enduring punishment, not because we think lightly of human sin, — not because we think proudly of our own merits, — not because we have low views of Christ. These are irrelevant slanders, with which theologians, baffled in argument, try to make good an untenable position. We avoid saying

Does any one ask for sayings of Jesus in which the holiness of God and his stern disapproval of sin are depicted? What if there are none? We have seen that Jesus did not use the terms "justice" or "wrath" of God; that he did not speak of God at all after the manner of our discussions of his "attributes." But it does not follow that what we call the eternal righteousness of God, his moral perfection which must be hostile to all sin, has no place in Jesus' conception. If he had never applied the word "holy"[1] to God or spoken of his judgment upon sin,[2] his revelation of the divine righteousness would not have been less clear and emphatic. The revelation of God through Christ is primarily in Christ's own life and character. "He that hath seen *me*, hath seen the Father." What was Jesus' attitude toward sin? *That* is the disclosure of God's estimate of it.

It should not be necessary to produce the evidence that Jesus took a most serious view of sin. But he exhibited its nature and ill desert chiefly by contrasting it with goodness. He did not keep saying to men, You are miserable sinners, repent and flee from the wrath to come. That was the message of John the Baptist, and a true and necessary message it was; but that of Jesus was something more and better. He said rather, You are meant to be, and may be, true sons of God; and he showed men what the life of sonship to God is. His was a positive message and a positive work. He revealed to men their sins by showing them the possible noble and holy life which opened before them, and bade them enter.

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that Christ purchased pardon from God's law, because we cannot find in that belief any meaning which is compatible with worthy thoughts of man or of God, of guilt or of salvation." R. Mackintosh, *Essays toward a New Theology*, p. 59. Professor B. B. Warfield has renewed the charge alluded to above in an article in the *Princeton Review* for January, 1903, in which he attributes defective views of sin to those who maintain what he calls "benevolencism," or the doctrine of the "indiscriminate love of God." In reviewing this article in the *Theol. Jahresbericht* for 1904, p. 1145, Titius very justly remarks: "Schärfste Zurückweisung verdient die Behauptung, dass die neueren subjectiven Theorien aus mangelndem Sündengefühl hervorgehen."

[1] Jn. xvii. 11; *cf. v.* 25.

[2] Mt. v. 21; xi. 22; xii. 36, etc.

Hence his was no mere repentance-baptism, but a baptism with the cleansing, life-giving Spirit of God. For him sin had all its hatefulness and horror, not as a kind of entity in itself, that is to say, as an abstraction, but as a contrast to goodness, a lapse and a failure to realize the real meaning and ends of life. It was his sense of man's infinite worth which supplied the measure by which he estimated whatever debased and ruined man. Hence no other ever saw and portrayed the exceeding sinfulness of sin as Jesus did. His pure eye saw deep down into the inmost nature of sin as a perversion of the moral life, a wrong choice and preference, a corruption of the will and of the affections, a threatened atrophy and loss of the soul. On the white background of his own conscious holiness, in the perfect light of the divine perfection, he saw and felt, as no other ever did, the black enormity of sin.

This realization of the evil and hatefulness of sin was based in Jesus' high and strenuous sense and knowledge of the divine holiness. This will be admitted and, indeed, regarded as axiomatic by all who have any appreciation of the life and work of Jesus. A certain class of theological writers, as I have intimated, seem disposed to make capital for their own theories of atonement by insinuations that those who hold other theories doubt or deny that Jesus regarded and treated sin in a great and serious way. I know of no Christian theologian who has any such idea, or of any theory of Christ's work which rests upon it. It is a fiction, a theological ghost, used to frighten those who are already too timorous of change in religious vocabulary and conceptions.

But it does not follow from Jesus' high conception of holiness that the inferences underlying the old theories of atonement are warranted. Imagine any one attributing to Jesus the idea that in God retributive justice is independent of love and superior to it, or maintaining that Jesus conceived his own death to be a means of averting war in the nature of God between his rival attributes, mercy and justice. These false separations and contrasts of opposing "attributes" in God are radically inconsistent with the Christian concept of God. There is not an intimation in the teaching of Jesus that the uprightness of God, his self-preservative holiness, involves an inexorable necessity to punish, or creates a bar or obstacle to the exercise of grace and the bestowment of forgiveness on the penitent. For Jesus the being of God is perfect unity, perfect harmony. How incongruous with his conception are those descriptions in theology which depict him as rent and torn by contending "attributes," or even as drawn in opposite directions by competing emotions, or which represent his nature as a forum in which mercy and justice bargain with each other for the maintenance of their respective rights. These crudities of a false psychology are inconsistent with the teaching of Jesus and are barely saved from seeming blasphemous by the religious interests which, with good intention, they are supposed to conserve.[1]

It may be worth while to point out that such conceptions have no warrant even in the Old Testament. They reflect a lower conception of God than that attained in Judaism. Says Professor Skinner: "The Old Testament writers know nothing of the sharp contrast often drawn by theologians between the righteousness and the mercy of God. Righteousness and saving activity, so far from being opposed to each other, are harmonious principles of action in the divine nature; Yahweh is a righteous God *and* a Saviour (Is. xlv. 21)."[2] Dillmann has discussed this point at length. He shows that the Israelite appealed to the divine righteousness not only in expressing the consciousness of his sin, but equally in expressing his hope of forgiveness and deliverance. The righteousness of God saves, as well as condemns. "Thy righteousness," says the Psalmist, "is like the depth of the sea; thou savest man and beast" (Ps. xxxvi. 6). Dillmann points out that we designate this second aspect or application of "righteousness" as grace or mercy, because we are accustomed to distinguish between penal righteousness and grace. The Hebrew, however, speaks even here of "righteousness," because to him "the exercise of grace also belongs to the nature and righteous rule of God. So far are the righteousness and the grace of God from forming, for him, a contrast, that he rather combines them as interchangeable conceptions, as together constituting the ground of salvation." Then follow numerous examples of the correlation, as synonyms, of righteousness, truth, and grace, with which 1 John i. 9, "faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins," is compared.[1]

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[1] Dr. Tymms aptly calls attention to the kinship between this sort of separation between the attributes of God, assumed in traditional theology, and the dualism and ditheism of Marcion, "the most famous heretic of the second century." *The Christian Idea of Atonement*, pp. 22, 23.

[2] Hastings's *D. B.* iv. 280. Numerous examples are given in the connection. *Cf.* Pfleiderer, *Glaubenslehre*, p. 81: "The Old Testament conception of the divine holiness remains also the fixed presupposition for the New Testament doctrine of God which is not 'replaced by love' (Ritschl), since the self-impartation of God is not to be thought of without the self-assertion of his perfect will." Δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ Pfleiderer defines as "die Ordnung seiner heiligen Liebe, welche dem Frommen ein Grund der Hoffnung und des Trostes, wie dem Gottlosen ein Grund der Furcht und des Schreckens ist" (pp. 82, 83).

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[1] *Alttest. Theol.*, pp. 273, 274. Professor J. H. Ropes has given this account of the Old Testament conception of righteousness: "The righteousness of the judge was most commonly thought of by Hebrews with reference to his acquittal or vindication of the righteous, rather than with reference to his justice in sending retribution upon the wicked. It was not so much the justice of the judge rendering strictly to each party according to his deserts, which impressed the mind of the Israelites, as rather the disposition of the judge to do justice to the righteous and downtrodden humble man. As the poor man has no influence by which he can impress the judge, any consideration shown him must be from righteousness alone. Hence righteousness and mercy came to be associated. The Israelite habitually looked at the justice of a judge from the point of view, not of a disinterested outsider, but of an innocent and defenceless suitor for protection. An excellent illustration of this habit of mind is Is. i. 17, where 'judge the fatherless' and 'plead for the widow' are parallel. See also Is. xi. 4; Jer. xxii. 15, 16; Deut. xxiv. 17; Ps. x. 18, lxxxii. 3. . . . Thus not only in the general sense of moral excellence or perfection was the righteousness of God frequently referred to by the Jews, but especially in the sense of the judge's merciful righteousness, the righteousness of God, who is the supreme ruler and judge, came to be a common expression. Sometimes, indeed, Israelites attributed their punishment to the motive of God's righteousness (as Neh. ix. 33; Dan. ix. 14, etc.), but more frequently they appealed to his righteousness (as we

It will be remembered that in inspecting the theological basis of Dr. Strong's theory of atonement (p. 178), we came upon this foundation stone: "That which is highest in us is highest also in God. As we may be kind, but must be righteous, so God, in whose image we are made, may be merciful, but must be holy." It is assumed here, of course, that mercy and righteousness, both in God and in man, are distinct, separate, and independent attributes. Now this is the verdict which Schultz says the Old Testament would pronounce upon the man who should regard it as optional with him whether he would be kind and merciful or not: "Integrity must be combined with 'goodness,' that the character may be perfectly trustworthy. Hence Israel believes in the goodness of his God. This is in no way antagonistic to his righteousness. *A man* would not be 'righteous' if he was not at the same time benevolent, ready to benefit and help, and, if need be, to excuse pardonable mistakes."[1] This type of Christian theology thus advocates an ethics which is below the standards of Old Testament morality and does not even scruple to ascribe to God a possible character which the Old Testament would condemn in a man. Nothing can be plainer than that the old Protestant theology advocated a conception of God which is flatly contradictory to the ethical teaching of the prophets. It might conceivably be contended that this circumstance is no objection; that the Old Testament is but a system of weak and beggarly elements, and (it might be argued), while it may make grace a part of righteousness, we are warranted in separating

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should to his goodness or mercy) when they wished deliverance from their enemies, or from any need. . . . The 'righteous acts of the Lord' which Samuel recounts to the people (1 Sam. xii. 7) are not, as we might expect, manifestations of his justice and uprightness, distributing to all according to their deserts, but examples of his gracious and undeserved goodness to Israel in spite of repeated apostasy and rebellion on the nation's part." Article: "'Righteousness' and 'The Righteousness of God' in the Old Testament and in St. Paul," in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. XXII. Pt. II. (1903), pp. 216–218.

[1] *O. T. Theol.* II. 157.

them and in setting them up in rivalry and contrast. But this is not the attitude taken by the theory which, indeed, assumes special kinship with the Old Testament ideas of law and sovereignty. But it is proper to urge that the dominant conceptions of the prophets and psalmists on this subject are likely to accord with those of Jesus and, indeed, to underlie them. It is with the prophetic conceptions of God and man and religion that the teaching and work of Jesus have in general the closest kinship. It would be strange, indeed, if Jesus' doctrine of God, if his conceptions of righteousness and mercy in God, were contrary to those of Israel's greatest ethical teachers. But why speak of presumptions? All that we can learn of the conceptions of Jesus on this subject accords perfectly with the prophetic doctrine as understood by such interpreters as I have quoted. The penal satisfaction theories of atonement — and other related theories in so far as they share the same premisses — are built upon presuppositions that are at once contrary to the Old Testament and irreconcilable with the teaching of Jesus.

When we turn to the writings of Paul we meet with the phrases, "the righteousness of God," and "the wrath of God," used in a judicial sense. The former term is, indeed, but infrequently employed to denote an attribute of God. The following are examples: "But if our unrighteousness commendeth the righteousness of God, what shall we say?" (Rom. iii. 5); "Whom God set forth to be a propitiation . . . to show his righteousness" (Rom. iii. 25, 26). The context shows that in the first of these passages "righteousness" means the faithfulness or truthfulness of God (*cf. vv.* 3, 4). His righteousness is, in this case, his faithfulness to his own nature and promises. If men are untrue to him, their falseness will but set his righteousness in the stronger relief. In the second passage, however, I cannot doubt that it is the judicial aspect of God's nature which "righteousness" is intended to emphasize. Paul is speaking of the work of Christ as exhibiting God's righteousness in such a way as to prevent men from supposing that he is lenient toward sin — in a way which is adapted to counterbalance, as it were, his indulgent treatment of sin in past times, and to show that he is not indifferent to it. Hence *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* in this passage denotes, or, at least, prominently includes, that self-respecting quality of holiness in God, that reaction of his nature against sin, which must express itself in its condemnation. Here, therefore, the meaning of "righteousness" approximates that of the divine wrath.[1] But I believe this to be the only passage in Paul where *δικαιοσύνη* especially emphasizes this aspect of the divine nature.

For the designation of the law and penalty side of God's being and action, the apostle several times employs the phrase *ὀργὴ θεοῦ*. The term is most frequently used in the description of the deep depravity of the heathen and Jewish worlds in Rom. i. and ii. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men."[2] Sinners are described as "children of wrath" (*τέκνα ὀργῆς*) (Eph. ii. 3), "sons of disobedience," upon whom God's wrath is visited (Col. iii. 6). This "wrath" is unquestionably presented in a certain contrast to mercy. The reprobate Jews are called "vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction," in contrast to the sons of God chosen from Jews and Gentiles alike, who are "vessels of mercy" (Rom. ix. 22, 23). The "wrath and indignation" which await the impenitent and wicked are contrasted with the "glory, honor, and peace" which are awarded to those who do good. The wrath of God is his holy displeasure against sin. It obviously emphasizes another aspect of God's being and action from that which we express by the terms "mercy" and "compassion."

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[1] Some scholars (*e.g.* Ritschl, Beyschlag, and Sabatier) deny that "righteousness" is used, even here, in a judicial sense. They interpret it to mean, God's purpose of grace which pardons and blesses. Weiss rejects this interpretation of the word here, but adds: "Ritschl, however, is perfectly right in rejecting the idea of *penal* righteousness, for the provision of a propitiation is the exact opposite of an execution of penalty, and just as in the Old Testament sacrificial system there is no such idea as that of the execution on the victim of the punishment deserved by the sinner, so here it is not to be conceived that God exhibited his righteousness by executing on Christ the penalty demanded by the law. He exhibited his righteousness, however, through the setting forth of a means of expiation in that he showed that sin must not longer go unpunished without being removed by an expiation ordained by him. Now the operation of this expiation did not consist (as in the Old Testament) merely in the exact performance of a divine requirement; it first received its expiatory power and effect through faith so that only in the case of him who places his trust for salvation upon Christ, is guilt covered by it and the grace of God imparted." *Bib. Theol. d. N. T.*, § 80, note 13. Ropes takes a view of the term in question somewhat similar to that of Ritschl. He thinks that the righteousness of God here means his "redeeming righteousness" — "that he might be both redeemer and justifier. The two words are not contrasted." *Op. cit.*, p. 226. Morison also says that the meaning "punitive righteousness," held by Meyer, *et al.*, is too narrow. *Critical Exposition of Romans Third*, p. 322.

[2] Rom. i. 18; *cf.* ii. 5, 8; iii. 5.

But what is the nature of this contrast? Is it such that in so far as God is angry at sin, he ceases to be merciful in feeling toward the sinner? Does wrath forestall the operation of mercy until it has been satisfied in punishment? Does God's wrath against sin involve the unconditional necessity that he should punish it? Does it mean that he cannot forgive sin until he has punished it? Does wrath stand in contrast to benevolence? Is it the negation of love? I believe that all these questions must be answered, on Pauline principles, in the negative.

The wrath of God is the reaction of his holy love against sin. It is not the opposite of love; it is a part or aspect of love. The opposite of love is hate, and God is not described as hating men. Let us see. The wrath of God which is denounced against the corrupt heathen world (Rom. i. 18) is his indignation against them for their neglect and contempt of his gracious revelation of himself to them in nature and conscience. Toward the Jews his indignation burns even more fiercely because they have despised his "goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering," by which he has sought to lead them to repentance. Through all their history they have been the objects of his mercy and love. But now, when his affronted love reacts against them in indignation, does it follow that he has utterly ceased to be gracious? In his wrath does he not remember mercy? Read the description of their lapse and of God's indignation for their apostasy in Rom. ix., x., and xi. Hath God, then, cries the apostle, utterly cast off his people? Far be it from me to believe so, he answers. He loves them, notwithstanding all. Objects of his displeasure (*ἐχθροί*), indeed, they are, but also "beloved" (*ἀγαπητοί*) (Rom. xi. 28), and he closes with a pæan of praise to God for the love which persists through indignation and chastisement, and which will, Paul believes, at length win the victory in "having mercy upon all."

Again: when we were yet sinners, we were objects of God's wrath (Rom. v. 8, 9). Were we not also objects of his love and compassion at the same time? Did we continue to be objects of his wrath *alone* until after Christ's death? Does the wrath express the whole of God's relation and attitude toward sinners? The apostle's answer is that *while we were* yet weak, and sinners, and objects of God's holy displeasure, God loved us and sent his Son to save us. It is not *in spite of the fact* that we were sinners and so exposed to God's wrath, that God pitied us and sent Christ for our rescue, but *just because* we were weak, sinful, and guilty. He would not have come to call us to repentance if we had been already righteous. If we had been safe and secure in his favor, he would have had no occasion to pity us. There is no opposition between the idea that in our sin he must condemn us and the fact that he pitied our case and yearned to save us. The condemnation and the pity are complements, counterparts, inseparable constituents of the same love.

Take quite a different example. In Rom. xiii. the apostle is discussing the function of civil authority. The magistrate, he declares, is God's agent or minister, charged, within a certain sphere, with the execution of the divine law. In other words, the state derives its right to punish from God, as the representative of his authority, and is, therefore, an "avenger for wrath for him that doeth evil" (Rom. xiii. 4). Here, surely, is a penal conception of wrath. It is a question of punishing, of visiting wrath upon men in the name of God. But is this "wrath" conceived as mere, sheer vengeance? Is it independent of love and separate from it? On the contrary, Paul explains that the whole object of these terrors of the law is to promote the general good (*εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν*, *v.* 4). The wrath has its place in conserving the welfare of society, and is subordinate to that end. Hence, the object to be obtained is a free obedience, not for wrath's sake, but for conscience' sake (*v.* 5). The passage is set between these two exhortations: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," and "Owe no man anything, save to love one another (that is the unending obligation which can never be wholly discharged); for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law."

The other principal references to God's wrath are in Colossians and Ephesians. In the former epistle Paul is exhorting the readers to put away those sins "on account of which the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience" (iii. 6). In Ephesians he is describing the baseness and corruption in which they all, as "sons of disobedience," — Jews and Gentiles alike, — had lived before their conversion. On account of these sins they were "children of wrath," objects of displeasure. But were they nothing more? Did that wrath mean the prevention or negation of love? The apostle continues: "But God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, quickened us together with Christ" (Eph. ii. 4, 5).

According to Paul, wrath and mercy are complementary factors of the divine love. Wrath denotes the holy indignation of God against wilful sin; mercy or grace denotes his pity or compassion toward the sinful and undeserving. They are distinguishable, but not separate; they are contrasts, but not contraries. They coöperate; they do not conflict. They may properly be said to condition one another, although such expressions are not wholly unobjectionable, since they seem to imply a separate existence or action of the elements of God's perfection. But we cannot wholly avoid such expressions. They may serve a useful and necessary purpose if we simply mean to indicate by them that God must act *as he is*, according to his *total nature* — that his revelation and action can never illustrate mere geniality, any more than they can proceed from vindictiveness alone. God is one. His perfections are in eternal unity and harmony. There is a perfect accord of his will with his nature. There is no rivalry among his perfections, no peril of war in his being. One attribute does not treat or traffic with another. No element of his moral nature is independent of the others. There is no one of his attributes which must be satisfied before some other can have play. The idea that certain elements of God's character subsist in his will and some in his essence is absurd. The separation of the "disposition" of God from his "nature" as the basis of a partition among the qualities of his character, is an example of that hypostatizing of abstractions which was common in the scholastic metaphysics. It is as unphilosophical as that crude psychology which conceived the soul as consisting of separate "faculties," after the manner of a ship built in water-tight compartments. Such notions derive support from Paul only by a superficial use of isolated words and phrases, arbitrarily defined and applied in utter disregard of the inner organism of his thought.

We should reach no essentially different result if we examined in detail the biblical conception of holiness.[1] This term denotes, alike in the Old Testament and in the New, the moral purity of God. It is never used in the sense of mere retributive justice. In pre-prophetic times the notion of God's greatness and majesty is prominent in the conception of his holiness. The priestly writers emphasize his holiness under the aspect of Yahweh's jealous care for the purity of his worship. In the prophets the conception rises to its greatest ethical height. His holiness is that quality in him which makes him "of too pure eyes to behold evil" (Hab. i. 13). While holiness manifests itself, upon occasion, as punitive righteousness, it is by no means synonymous with it. It is a much broader term and "embraces every distinctive attribute of Godhead" (Skinner). It is a name for "moral perfectness." God is "the Holy One of Israel"; holiness is a designation for his ethical nature, conceived especially in contrast to all sin and evil, but it is appropriately pointed out by Dillmann that the Old Testament never designates God as "the wrathful One of Israel," the God whose primary attribute is penal righteousness.[1]

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[1] See the articles on "Holiness in the Old Testament and New Testament" by Professor Skinner and the present writer, in Hastings's *D. B.*

The holiness of God is not differently understood in the New Testament. It comprehends both "the goodness and the severity of God"; it issues alike in redemption and in judgment. It is quite as accordant with God's holiness to seek to recover men from sin to likeness to himself as it is to condemn and punish persistent, wilful sin. In the New Testament, as in the Old, God is represented as calling men to repentance and obedience, just because he is holy. The summons is: "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet. i. 16). The term "holy" is but seldom applied to God in the New Testament, but the idea expressed by it is constantly assumed. God is self-preserving purity; his holiness is, as we may say, his eternal moral self-respect — exaltation above and hostility to all sin. But this holiness stands in no opposition to his grace and is no bar to its operation; in fact, grace, compassion, equity, and generosity are elements of holiness. The Johannine writings, especially, bring out this fulness and richness of the divine holiness. "Holy Father," Jesus prays, "keep them in thy name which thou hast given me" (Jn. xvii. 11). Here the holiness of the Father is his absolute goodness to which the appeal is made that he would guard the disciples of Jesus from all evil. Holiness appears in the aspect of the guardian watch care of God for the flock of Christ. The notion of the divine righteousness is the same, as is seen in a parallel expression a few verses farther on, "O righteous Father, the world knew thee not, but I knew thee," etc. The righteousness of God here appears as the quality which prevents him from passing the same judgment upon Christ's disciples as he passes upon the sinful world. It is the equitableness of God, his moral self-consistency, his justice to his own equity. Essentially the same idea is found in the First Epistle, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous (πιστὸς καὶ δίκαιος) to forgive us our sins" (1 Jn. i. 9). Here God's righteousness is coupled with his fidelity to his nature and promises as the gracious, forgiving God. The whole context carries the idea that God is so righteous that he will certainly forgive them that repent. This is but a reproduction of a prophetic idea. Yet there is an *a priori* theology which insists that God's righteousness is an obstacle to forgiveness; that God's righteousness is the unconditional necessity to punish sin.

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[1] "Nirgends lesen wir 'der Zornige Israels,' wie 'der Heilige Israels.'" *Alttest. Theol.*, p. 261.

It is in this epistle that the moral nature of God is twice summed up in the saying: "God is love" (1 Jn. iv. 8, 16). But we are reminded by the advocates of penal theories that it is also said that "God is light" (1 Jn. i. 5), the intimation being that this means that God's essential nature is penal righteousness, that is, that God must inflict its full penalty upon all sin.[1] This formula, "God is light," is said by the writer of the epistle to be the sum and substance of the message which he derived from Christ. The interpretation in question, then, would amount to this: The burden of Jesus' teaching — the sum of his revelation of God is, that God will and must punish all sin, because the primary attribute of his nature is avenging righteousness. Whether that which John had learned from Jesus, and had come more and more to understand, was, primarily, that God was wrath, we will leave the reader to judge. In itself the figure of light is as well adapted to express the idea of God's self-revealing, self-imparting goodness, as that of purity in contrast to evil. Why should it not include both, as the Johannine conception of the divine love certainly does? "God is light" does mean that God is pure or holy; but so, also, does the statement that "God is love." But neither excludes the divine grace, nor expresses any contrast with it. The concept of light is used in precisely the same combinations of thought in this epistle as the concept of love; indeed, the figure of light is merged into the description of love as constituting the essence of Godlike life, as of God himself. The interpretation of "light" as meaning punitive righteousness totally disregards the context in which it is used and the course of thought in the epistle as a whole, and attributes to the writer the absurd assertion that the burden of Jesus' message concerning God was that he is inexorably compelled to punish all sin. In point of fact, the term "light" is a figurative designation for love.[1]

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[1] So Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 129.

But Paul is the chief resort of those who maintain that God *may be* merciful, but *must be* just, that is, must necessarily punish all sin. Let us see how the case stands. "That which is highest in us is highest also in God." "Mercy is optional with him";[2] it must also be such for us. Retributive righteousness is highest in God; it would, therefore, be the highest quality, the loftiest reach of perfection in us. Well, Paul has written a short treatise on the nature of true virtue which we know as 1 Cor. xiii. There he has stated what is the "highest" in human character and, presumably, in God, since Godlikeness is the test and measure of all goodness in man. We ought, then, to read: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not penal righteousness, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but fall short of likeness to God in his primary attribute of punitive justice, I am nothing. Other virtues shall pass away or be fulfilled in higher forms of virtue, but the necessity to punish remains as the one supreme excellence. And now abideth faith, hope, and retributive righteousness, these three; but the greatest of these is retributive righteousness." In the penal satisfaction revision of the New Testament another Pauline passage would undergo considerable modification. It is that splendid description of what is "highest in man" when he rises into a new Godlike life with Christ and learns to set his affections on things that are above (Col. iii. 1 *sq.*). This is the catalogue of the ascending scale of virtues into which as a new man in Christ he is required to rise (with the single change proposed by the penal theology): "Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye; and above all these things put on distributive justice, which is the bond of perfectness." The reader may take his choice between the two versions, — between the penal and the Pauline theology. He cannot, without contradiction, hold both.

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[1] Augustine's remark concerning John's writings is quite true, Locutus est multa, sed prope omnia de caritate.

[2] Strong, *Philosophy and Religion*, p. 196.

It should be said at once, however, that the great majority of present-day theologians hold with the apostle, and with the New Testament generally, that what *should be* highest in us *is* highest in God, namely, love. I will give a few examples : —

"The saying of the apostle, 'God is love,' is the best compendium of the Christian idea of God."[1] "Love is the supreme, the only adequate definition of the essence of God."[2] "God himself is good only as he is love, and his holiness and his righteousness depend upon his love."[3] "God is love, the perfect, the absolutely good and only good Being, so that no attribute or activity can be ascribed to him which cannot be derived from his love."[4] It would be easy greatly to extend the list of such quotations.[5] It is the well-known characteristic of present-day theological thought that it starts from the conceptions of God's fatherhood and love, as the old theology started from the notion of his justice, conceived as the principle of retribution and punishment. This point of view is primarily and predominantly legal; the thought of to-day is ethical. In this we see a return to the biblical standpoint. There righteousness and holiness are not contrasts to love, but synonyms of love; they are kindred to it, not independent of it. The *a priori* definitions of these terms in books of theology as having nothing in common with goodness, benevolence, or grace, and as meaning an unconditional necessity to punish, are radically unbiblical; they were never derived from Scripture and cannot be harmonized with it. These arbitrary descriptions of the divine attributes, it is safe to say, are sanctioned by no first-rate recent authority in exegesis or biblical theology.

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[1] Van Oosterzee, *Christian Dogmatics*, I. 269.

[2] Dorner, *System of Christian Doctrine*, I. 454.

[3] Julius Müller, *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, I. 113.

[4] C. I. Nitzsch, *System der christlichen Lehre*, p. 145.

[5] See, *e.g.*, Sartorius, *The Doctrine of Divine Love*, pp. 8, 9; Kaftan, "Die Liebe ist die vornehmste unter den Eigenschaften Gottes," etc., *Dogmatik*, p. 181; F. A. B. Nitzsch, "Sie (Liebe) ist Ziel und Krone," etc., *Dogmatik*, p. 405; Lipsius, *Dogmatik*, pp. 278, 279. This author

It has been necessary to bring out into strong relief this contrariety between the old dogmatic definitions out of which the legal interpretations of atonement were spun, and the actual biblical conceptions of God, because here is the parting of the ways. The penal theories are right if their initial definitions of God's ethical nature are correct. But I have deemed it worth while to show — largely by appeal to the most eminent experts in exegesis — that, whether right or wrong, they are not biblical. I have no hesitation in pronouncing them fundamentally erroneous. The old theories of atonement are not built upon the Christian concept of God. They were constructed without any study of the history and contents of that concept. They are *a priori*, speculative, arbitrary constructions, with no proper basis in exegesis or history. The most extreme of these forms of thought — the penal satisfaction theory — is built up in violation and defiance

defines love as the "higher unity" of God's attributes, inclusive of his goodness and his righteousness. "This higher conception of the righteousness of God," adds Lipsius, that is, the conception of it as "fatherly" and of the same nature with love, "although it is definitely enough set forth in the Holy Scriptures, is entirely wanting in our dogmaticians, who conceive righteousness predominantly as penal, and in no case extend it beyond the sphere of the moral law of God."

of the biblical concept of God. Its definitions negative point blank the conclusions of the most capable and unprejudiced exegesis.

Even conservative writers who are very slow to break with long-established usage in theological thought and speech are beginning to see and to acknowledge this fact. We have already noted several examples in the cautious admissions of those who seek to maintain a quasi or semi-penal view of Christ's death.[1] I will give one other illustration. The late Professor Candlish observes that the old theories of atonement "have mainly proceeded on the plan of taking from Scripture the idea of righteousness, and interpreting this by various philosophic assumptions, while the series of statements about our union with Christ in his death have been overlooked or little used. To this," he adds, "appears to be due a certain hardness in all these forms of doctrine, as well as some of their theoretic difficulties, and a natural reaction against these led to the emphasizing of the neglected elements of Pauline and Johannine teaching."[2]

We conclude, then, (1) that the righteousness and holiness of God are, almost invariably, comprehensive designations in Scripture and include not merely the self-affirming purity, but also the self-imparting impulse, the benevolence or grace of God. In no case do they denote mere retributive justice.[3] (2) Love is the best name for the moral character of God, that is, of course, holy love, a love that is at once gracious and righteous. (3) Jesus' favorite name for God was "Father," and this term connotes original, creative, sustaining, and self-imparting love. (4) The separation of the moral attributes of God, the method of setting them up in independence, rivalry, and contrast, impairs the conception of the divine unity and is as false in its psychological assumptions as it is unscriptural in its applications and results. (5) God's perfections are in eternal unity and harmony, and his procedure in the work of salvation is in accordance with them all. The notion that they compete, rival, obstruct, or checkmate one another is crudely anthropomorphic and philosophically absurd. God must act as he is, in consistency and conformity with his total nature. The distinctions of independent and dependent, of necessary and optional attributes, of constitutional and voluntary perfections, are devised *ex post facto* as means of defending an orthodox rationalism which cannot subsist without resort to such desperate expedients. Definitions and conclusions alike are unphilosophical and unscriptural. (6) It is false to assert that the primary note in the Christian concept of God is that he must always and unconditionally punish all sin. It is false to assert that he cannot forgive sin until he has punished it. To say that his holiness interposes an obstacle to forgiveness which must first be removed by sacrifice or suffering, is inconsistent with the biblical concept of God. The statement that the offering of animal sacrifices in the Old Testament, or even the death of Christ in the New, is the *ground* of forgiveness, is also unwarranted. The assertion cannot be harmonized with the teaching of the prophets or with that of Jesus himself. The *ground* of forgiveness is *the grace of God* or what the Hebrew prophets call the "righteousness of God" — whatever may be its conditions, means, and accompaniments.[1]

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[1] See pp. 190–197.

[2] *The Christian Salvation*, p. 49.

[3] "Righteousness" is used in this sense in the Pharisaic *Psalms of Solomon* (ii. 16; viii. 29, 30, 32; ix. 8, 10).

In one of the discourses which compose Dwight's *Theology* (II. 200) the author is descanting upon the inexorable character of the divine law. It must be, he says, invariably executed. Its penalties are fixed and sure. As a biblical warrant for this unconditional necessity to punish, he quotes the prophetic word: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. xviii. 20).[1] "This threatening of the law against transgression," he declares, "is absolute. In it there is no mention, and plainly no admission, of repentance as the foundation of escape to the transgressor." I happen to possess the copy of this work which belonged to the late Professor Samuel Harris. On the margin opposite the above assertion he has written: "*False!* The very next words are, 'If he turn from his wickedness, he shall live' (*v.* 21) — the most explicit assurance of pardon to penitents." The incident illustrates at once the exegetical methods by which the old theories were maintained and the nature of the appeal to history and fact by which they have been discredited.

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[1] "Grace is, indeed, the highest category under which we can think of God. It rises as much above righteousness as righteousness rises above the category under which natural religion conceives God, that, namely, of Might directed by intelligence. A God of righteousness is certainly a great advance upon a God of mere power; yet it is only a step upward toward a higher idea of God, in which the divine Being becomes self-communicating, redeeming Love. God cannot be said to have been fully revealed till he has been revealed in this aspect." A. B. Bruce, *The Chief End of Revelation*, p. 59.

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[1] The author overlooks the fact, by the way, that his application of this passage would exclude the possibility of substitution, or, indeed, the exercise of mercy on any terms. If the sinner must unconditionally suffer the penalty of his sin, then both substitution and salvation are out of the question.

CHAPTER II

THE PERSONALITY OF THE SAVIOUR

It is commonly regarded as an axiom in theology that the opinion which is held concerning the person of Christ will determine the conception of his saving work. We have seen that the theory of Anselm rested entirely upon a certain conception of Christ's person. He must be man in order to be competent to render what was due to God from man, and he must be God in order to be able to do what man is powerless to do. This conception, in less precise and definite form, is seen to be reflected in the various types of orthodoxy; the efficacy of the atonement, it is said, implies both the divinity and the humanity of our Lord.

If by this contention is meant that the saving value of Christ's work for men is dependent upon the truth of any one of the theories of his person which have obtained, at different periods, in ecclesiastical history, it would appear to me quite unwarranted. Would any one maintain, for example, that Christ's saving power is involved in the question, disputed in ancient theology, whether the human nature which he assumed in the incarnation was personal or impersonal? Will it be contended that the import of the Master's sufferings is dependent upon the questions at issue between the earlier Christologies and Kenoticism? There are undoubtedly individuals who would make claims of this sort, but I find no evidence that the foremost writers on the subject are disposed to pivot their views of atonement upon any specific Christological theory. Indeed, it is a noticeable fact that these writers do not discuss the doctrine of the person of Christ. A certain general view of his character and mission is, of course, presupposed, but there is no disposition to claim an exclusive validity and value for any one of the numerous speculations which have been advanced regarding the mystery of his person.

I cannot doubt, however, that all students of the subject would agree that the view taken of Christ himself is of great importance in any effort to determine the method and nature of his saving work. We must, therefore, before proceeding farther, raise the question: What assumptions concerning the personality of Christ are fundamental to belief in his saving power? Why should he, and no other, be regarded as the Saviour of the world? This question gives rise to others, such as these: How shall we determine what views of Christ are of fundamental importance in this connection? To what sources of information shall we resort in order to ascertain and define these necessary assumptions? Some, of course, would answer, To the authorized creeds. This is the appeal to authority. But when one remembers that official orthodoxy is, after all, only the doctrine that won by a majority vote, he is deterred from hinging too much upon the mere success of an opinion. For myself, I would take the question into the light of the consciousness of Christ himself. I do not, however, overlook the fact, that this appeal is attended with some difficulty. We have no direct access to the consciousness of Jesus; we are dependent upon reports of his words made by others, upon reflections cast by his inner life upon the minds and hearts of his disciples. Still, of all the attempts to picture the personality of Christ, the New Testament must ever remain the photograph which is nearest to the life. To this source, then, let us go with our question: What peculiarities in his own personality did Jesus himself regard as essential to his work as the Saviour of the world?

One of the most unique and significant factors in the consciousness of Jesus is his conviction of his own sinless holiness. Not that he was constantly asserting his freedom from sin; such a self-assertion could hardly have failed to arouse suspicion regarding the clarity and candor of his moral consciousness. He is never said to have categorically asserted his sinlessness. According to the Fourth Gospel he once uttered the challenge, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" (Jn. viii. 46); but it is not quite certain that these words are meant in an absolute, universal sense. It is not on the ground of assertions made by Jesus himself that the Christian world believes in his perfection. The more immediate reasons for that belief are these: (1) the fact that his life reveals to us, under the closest scrutiny, no moral stain; and (2) the fact that those who companied with him, friends and foes alike, received and attested the same impression. Here was a man who seemed to those who knew him in the flesh to be holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, and whose spirit, purposes, and deeds have ever since seemed to those who have contemplated them to be free from all admixture of sin. He was tempted, without yielding. He lived in constant contact with evil, without contracting it. He was a friend of publicans and sinners, but was untainted by their sordidness and selfishness.

The sinlessness of Jesus was something more than innocence; it was fulness, positive perfection of life. Jesus was no recluse; his holiness was no cloistered virtue. His character was not of that negative, ascetic type whose ideal is to escape from the sinful world and dwell apart in holy contemplation. Nor did his perfection consist in a repression or toning down of any of the legitimate powers of manhood. He mingled freely with his fellow-men at their work and their recreations, in their joys and in their sorrows. His life was always at its maximum of energy and strength. He had no fear of being soiled by contact with the world. He joined his brother-men in the struggles of life and the battle with sin, proving himself to many the Captain of their salvation, leading them on to victory and strength. These are qualities and powers without which Jesus could not have been the Saviour. He qualified himself to be the Redeemer by the achievement of the perfect life; he attained completeness through his experience of trial, conquest, and suffering and so became the author of life to all who will join themselves to him.

Our Lord well knew what sin was. He had felt its attractive, seductive power. At the beginning of his ministry the path to an easy victory had opened before him if he would but bow to the requirements of the age and consent to be the wonder-worker whom popular messianic thought demanded; but he saw that this would be but a false and hollow success. His soul was most sensitive to the approach and suggestions of evil; he detected it under its most winsome and deceptive disguises. In vain did Satan clothe himself as an angel of light; in vain did his suggestions take on the guise of plausibility and prudence; the answer was the same, Get thee behind me! And with what a piercing glance did he discern the lurking selfishness in the thoughts of other men. He could detect the taint of hypocrisy in the prayers of the self-righteous, the intolerance which often underlay religious zeal, the envy and meanness that sought to cloak themselves in an ostentatious generosity. None ever saw so clearly and exposed so plainly the sinfulness of other men; yet he confessed no sin of his own; he betrayed no consciousness of an evil bias or a selfish motive. Just here lies the supreme proof of the sinless holiness of Christ. It is impossible that one who knew and judged sin as he did could have failed to find and confess it in himself unless he had been conscious of a perfectly holy inner life. This is the moral miracle of Jesus; this is the transcendent, inexplicable wonder of his person. Men have tried to exalt him by ascribing to him all manner of metaphysical characteristics and powers; but that which the Gospels place in the forefront of their portraiture is just this moral completeness, this perfectly filial consciousness, this stainless, untainted holiness.

Without this he could not have been the Saviour; with it he could not but be. Perfect holiness fits him for perfect sympathy with sinners; perfect love enables him to bear the burdens of a sinful world. Law, righteousness, purity — does he not know what these are? They are the very breath of his own inner life. Is he not able to honor and exalt them? They are enthroned in his every thought; they preside over his every act. If a pure spirit like his ever visits our prison-house, he will surely never condone our sin, and will open no door of escape except through purification, and will offer us no refuge and no safety save in a holiness like his own. Here is One who knows sin as no other ever knew it, who judges it as God judges. His eye discerns its blighting, soul-destroying power; he sees it black against the white radiance of the eternal love. If he undertakes to save men, he will save them *from sin to holiness*. Let his method be what it will; be his specific experiences in our world what they may, there is but one conceivable way in which Holy Love can recover sinful man, and that is by destroying sin through replacing it — by winning men into sympathy, contact, likeness, to the life of holy love in God.

Another characteristic of the personality of Jesus was his singularly fraternal feeling for men, his close sympathetic union with them. He was truly a man to whom nothing human was alien — one with whom the promotion of others' good was a passion. This was, perhaps, his most striking peculiarity. His holiness did not remove him from other men, but drew him to them and made him one with them. His ideal of greatness was found in service and self-giving; these were the test and measure of greatness in others; they were equally the form of his own perfection. He came to minister, to be servant of all, to give his life a ransom for many. He was not, indeed, constantly professing his humility, his desire to serve and bless, his eager interest in others; that would have been an ostentation. He just lived an unpretentious life of absolute devotion to the highest good of his brother-men. His was the perfectly useful life. His one concern was to awaken and foster the higher aspirations in men. He taught and labored and suffered to win them to the life that is worth living, the life of Godlike sympathy, service, and helpfulness; he died that men might not live unto themselves (2 Cor. v. 15).

As we read the most original descriptions which we possess of what Jesus said and did, we receive the impression that he conceived himself as the heaven-sent Friend of man. He made the suffering and sinful lot of men his chief care. He bade the weary and burdened come to him and find peace in a serene trust in God like his own. He went about his appointed task of preaching good tidings to the poor, proclaiming release to captives, and setting at liberty them that were bruised. This is the way in which Jesus himself talked about his saving work. When men asked him what were the conditions of obtaining eternal life, the substance of his answer was: Begin living the eternal life here and now; adopt and obey the law of love and you shall live; give your life in self-denying helpfulness and you will save it. But one who has any familiarity with theology cannot state these simple teachings of Jesus without a keen sense of their pitiable inadequacy when judged by the tests of the theoretic *ordo salutis* of theological tradition. There is no gospel in all this, we are told; this is no Christian doctrine of salvation; Jesus, indeed, had no gospel to preach; for that we must look to the reflections and arguments of others. All this teaching of Jesus about the love and fatherhood of God is meaningless until the light of subsequent apostolic thought is thrown upon it and the doctrines of expiation and propitiation enable us to assign to it some intelligible significance and value. It would be quite impossible for theological traditionalism not to betray an ill-disguised impatience with the teaching of Jesus. Is this all? is its attitude; salvation by *mere* repentance and reformation; eternal life obtainable on the purely *sentimental* condition of living the life of love; God as willing to forgive men as that weak-minded father in the parable! Where is his justice? Is there no wrath to be appeased? What of man's back debts? What of his accumulated guilt? Has God no legislation to enforce, no moral government to protect?

From the standpoint in question these defects are fatal and decisive. The doctrine of expiation is not here. But one of two courses remains: either the doctrine must be forced from the word "ransom" and from Matthew's phrase, "for the forgiveness of sins," or the teaching of Jesus must be surrendered as a source of the real theological gospel. Not infrequently the effort and the admission are conjoined, the admission tacitly attesting the futility of the effort.

It may be questioned, however, whether if we had an adequate appreciation of Jesus' simple teaching, we should be so ready to deny that it is a gospel, or to exclaim: Is this all? I believe that if we had a deeper and truer sense of what the divine love is and of what it can do; if we even knew what human love, in its perfection, is, we should not form so light an estimate of a teaching which declared that love is the sum of all law and all duty. I believe that if we could adequately apprehend the nature of that union with man into which our Lord entered by virtue of his unfathomable love, we should be less disposed to depreciate it as nothing but a sentimental sympathy. I cannot help feeling that if we knew the depths of his meaning when he spoke of coming to minister even unto death on behalf of mankind, we might not feel the necessity of supplementing that conception with some supposed profundity from Paul in order that it might be worthy of a place in our theology. For myself, I must incur the reproach of breaking with our theological tradition entirely at this point. I find the gospel, and the whole gospel, in Jesus himself, presented with a clarity, a simplicity, a transcendent beauty and matchless power nowhere equalled. I believe that our traditional theology lightly esteems it because it measures his words by its own artificial distinctions and learned superficiality. Even though I be arraigned for "talking down to St. Paul," I protest my belief that Jesus came to preach the gospel, and that in word and life and death he did preach it, and that all subsequent expositions of that gospel, whether apostolic or post-apostolic, are but "broken lights" of him.

We could wish that our access were more immediate than it is to the sayings of Jesus concerning himself and his relation to mankind. We have to see him through the medium of the reports, impressions, and reflections of others, in all cases recorded after a considerable lapse of time. In some instances these reports are strongly colored by inferences and theories which were rife in the various Christian circles of the period. Our earliest witness, the apostle Paul, has very little to say of the words and deeds of Jesus; his interest centres almost entirely in a philosophy as to the import of his death, resurrection, and exaltation. The Johannine tradition, though keenly alive to the importance of his earthly life, narrates its story in the forms and terms of a pronounced type of religious and theological reflection. Even the Synoptic Gospels are not without their apologetic features. When, therefore, the student contemplates his sources historically and not in accordance with an *a priori* theory, and remembers that all our primitive Christian documents are written in a different language from that employed by our Lord, we see that we have no access to the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus and are deterred from hinging too much upon individual words and phrases. We must be content with the broad outlines of his teaching concerning himself and with the impressions to which his life gave rise in the earliest witnesses and communities whose testimonies have been preserved to us.

There can be no doubt that Jesus spoke of himself as the Son of man, the Founder of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, the Revealer of the Father to men, the Friend of sinners, who had come to show them the way of forgiveness and peace. In a word, he made man's case his own; it was his passion to reveal to men their possible sonship to God and to help them to realize it. Accordingly we find that his life produced the impression that he was the typical, representative, ideal man. Some have found this idea directly expressed in Jesus' favorite self-designation, "the Son of man." But if this interpretation may not be justified; if the term is rather a messianic title, still the notion in question lies near to hand. As the Founder and Head of the Kingdom of the Godlike on earth, Jesus was conscious of a unique relation, as of a unique mission, to mankind.

In what forms, let us ask, has this aspect of the life-work of Jesus left its traces upon primitive Christian thought. One of the most striking is Paul's conception of him as the second Adam, the Man from heaven, the Founder of a new humanity. He is to Paul's mind the counterpart of the natural head of the race. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22). "As through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous" (Rom. v. 19). In the Epistle to the Hebrews the conception is that Jesus was the spiritual Priest of mankind who became one with his fellows in temptation and suffering that he might succor the tempted and "deliver them who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii. 15, 18). Again, he is the Chieftain who safely leads his followers to victory over suffering and sin. He is one who has trodden the path on which we must go. He learned obedience through the discipline of trial and pain. He is himself the typical man of faith and as such can be the perfecter of our trust in God. In a word, he is the Leader, the Example, the Representative, and thus the true High Priest of mankind. In the Johannine books he appears as the bearer and embodiment of the divine love to man — the Messenger of the eternal life — through whom we are brought into union and fellowship with God. He is the Holy One who challenges every man who hopes in him to purify himself even as he is pure. Here, too, he appears as the Paraclete, the Advocate of mankind, who pleads the cause of his friends before God; he is the vine in which they abide as branches; he is the Good Shepherd who gives even his life itself for his sheep.

Such are some of the various forms in which the representative relation of Jesus to men is expressed. They are the witnesses to the impression made by his life and personality. They testify at once to the reality and to the ideality of his humanity. They describe his fitness, his competence to be the Saviour. In him, for the first time, we see humanity at its climax. In him only do we learn what our moral personality means; in him we find, as some of the old divines said, the "recapitulation" of our humanity. We can rest our case with him; where he leads we may confidently follow; we can trust his interpretation of life and of death; through his assuring word we dare to hope in God's mercy and to believe in the fact of eternal life here in the midst of time and change.

But there is another class of representations of which we must take account. They are those which describe our Lord's unique relation to God. According to the Gospels he conceived himself as the Son of God; he possessed a peculiar sense of God's fatherhood. It is a noticeable circumstance that while he regards God as the Father of all men, he never classes himself and other men under the same category as sons of God in the same sense. In speaking to men of God he says "my Father" and "your Father," but not "our Father." It is not open to question that he regarded his own sonship to God as involving a special, incomparable relation. There is some peculiarly close union, some unique fellowship between him and the Father. In some exceptional sense he can say that only the Father knows the Son and the Son alone knows the Father (Mt. xi. 27). Now, the notion of sonship to God is familiar to us from the Old Testament. The Son of God — the nation, the king, or the magistrate — is the special object of God's love and favor. Between them there is a unique mutual knowledge and fellowship. This idea must guide us here. As Son of God *par excellence* Jesus is the special Representative and Revealer of God; he is like the only begotten son of a father (Jn. i. 14), on whom the paternal love is concentrated.

The title was doubtless a messianic designation, and yet it must have expressed for the consciousness of Jesus much more than any official title could include. It was the symbol of what was most peculiar and characteristic in the inner life of Jesus: his sense of a unique relation to God out of which grew his sense of his unique mission.

The full and precise nature of that union of the Son with the Father we are unable adequately to define; we can only see it on the side which is turned toward us. But we can understand it well enough to see that it is clothed with rich and intelligible meanings. We can apprehend it in the light in which Jesus himself and the New Testament writers, in general, have presented it to us. The whole stress of New Testament teaching is laid upon the conception that Jesus is the Mediator and Saviour because he is the unique Revealer and Interpreter of God. As the Fourth Gospel expresses it: This well-beloved Son who dwells in the bosom of the Father, he hath interpreted (ἐξηγήσατο) God to men (Jn. i. 18). It is true that we observe in Paul and in the Fourth Gospel the beginnings of that long course of Christological speculation which eventuated in the Nicene and Chalcedonian creeds, but it is a fair question whether the terms employed in these writings have not been read by later thought in a too severely speculative sense; that is, whether the primary object of the use of such terms as "logos," "image of God," and "wisdom of God" was not practical and religious, rather than metaphysical. The more I have considered the matter, the more probable it has seemed to me that these writers seized upon such terms of philosophic speech as were available to them in order to express their sense of the unique character and revealing, saving significance of Christ, and not with the intention of proposing a speculative theory of his person. Be that as it may, it is certain that in the most primitive reports of our Lord's sayings he is uniformly represented as being the Messenger and Minister of the divine mercy to mankind, the Revealer of God, the perfect Teacher, the pattern Man, the heaven-sent Guide to the Father's house.

These aspects of his person and life are fundamental to the biblical conception of his saving mission. He is one who does for us what God alone can do. In him God dwells, and through him God works as in and through no other. He is one to whom the Father "gave not the Spirit by measure." The divinity of Christ is presupposed in the Christian view of his Saviourhood. Christ is the human embodiment of God, the one in whom God uniquely comes to us ; his is the face in which we behold the glory of God reflected ; in him we see the Father. Now, there are many to whom such a summary of the New Testament facts will seem quite inadequate unless we add the later metaphysical terms of ecclesiastical theology and state of what " substances " Christ is composed, how two " natures " are conjoined in his person by a " hypostatic union," and affirm that as to his divine nature, he was " eternally begotten " of the Father's essence. If these assertions contribute anything to the significance, value, or intelligibility of Christ's person and work, let them by all means be employed. Many regard them, however, as the survivals of extinct theological controversies, directed chiefly against obsolete Gnostic speculations, and in no practical way longer serviceable to our apprehension of Christ. Without questioning their usefulness in their time and with full recognition of the religious truths which the ancient Christological controversies conserved, it seems to me that we are adhering to what is most characteristic in apostolic thought and, especially, are keeping closest to Jesus' own self-testimony, when we magnify the moral and religious significance of his person and define to ourselves the uniqueness of Christ, not in the cold and bloodless categories of metaphysics, but in the terms in which he seems to have conceived and expressed his own union with God in reciprocal knowledge and mutual fellowship. That, at least, is what Christian faith can apprehend and apply, be its metaphysical background what it may.

It should be remembered that the ecclesiastical Christologies were wrought out when a dualistic philosophy was prevalent, and were based upon its assumptions. Wholly divine or wholly human, was the current antithesis. Hence the definitions of Christ's person appeared to describe a being composed of two disparate natures added together, or existing only in some kind of juxtaposition or interaction. The divine and the human were generically different. Hence, if Christ were defined as thoroughly, perfectly human, his divinity was thereby excluded. The more complete and perfect was his humanity, the less room was left for any divinity. A more monistic philosophy has had its influence upon this, as upon all theological problems. If God and man are not different in kind, but like in kind, then why should not perfect humanity be the truest expression of divinity? Why should not the perfect human life of Christ be the completest translation which the Infinite can make of himself into the terms of our finiteness? The historic facts are that the ancient Christologies were constructed according to the metaphysical theories then current, and that changed conceptions of the nature of God and man and their relations are introducing modified views of the very idea and contents of the term, "the divinity of Christ." Says Dr. Somerville: "We are not to find his (Christ's) divinity in anything outside of his human life, but in the divine perfection of that human life itself, in the perfection of his love and holiness. He is more than man, he is divine; but his divinity, in so far as it is apprehensible by us, is that of which human nature is capable, without which it is an imperfect and fragmentary thing, and infinitely less than what God made it to be — a divinity which he communicates to as many as receive him and in him become children of God."[1]

The first Christians had a direct and immediate knowledge of Jesus' saving power. So far as they formed theoretic views of his person, they did so on the basis of their experience of his salvation. They did not deduce their conceptions of his power to save from theories of his person, but formed their estimates of his person in accordance with their knowledge and experience of his saving grace. The motives, therefore, which impelled them to define the person of their Lord were practical and religious, rather than speculative. The apostles and their successors approached what we call the problem of Christ's person, not from without but from within; in fellowship with him, they had found God; how, then, were they to think of him in whose face they had seen the Father?

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[1] *St. Paul's Conception of Christ*, p. 48.

They did not propose a theoretic solution of this problem in the sense in which modern speculative thought attempts to solve metaphysical problems; they rather expressed their convictions concerning certain assumptions which the facts known to them — especially the facts of their own experience — seemed to require. They knew that Jesus Christ was a real man, but they were also sure that God had dwelt and wrought in and through him in a wholly exceptional manner. To the mind of the Church of the first age God was in Christ as in no other; he was God manifest in the flesh, the reason, mind, and love of God revealed and interpreted in terms of human life and experience. The first Christian thinkers searched the vocabulary of their age for terms in which to express their sense of the unique significance, the incomparable value, of Christ. They called him the image or impress of God (Col. i. 15; Heb. i. 3), the first-born or only begotten Son of God (Col. i. 15; Jn. i. 18), the outshining of the divine majesty (Heb. i. 3), the Word, the self-expression, the uttered Reason of God (Jn. i. 1, 14). They called him, after the manner of the sapiential books of Judaism, the eternal Wisdom of God through whose coöperation God formed the worlds (1 Cor. i. 24; Heb. i. 2; Col. i. 16; Jn. i. 3). By such terms as these which were the current coin of the Jewish and Alexandrian thought-worlds of the period, did the early Christian teachers express the results of their reflections and experiences in the school of Christ. They believed that in some profound and mysterious sense the roots of his being were in God; he was to them, as he must ever be for Christian experience, the divine-human personality. He was at once the interpretation of God to man and of man to himself. In him the nature, will, and world-purpose of God stood revealed. He was the truth of God's mind and feeling. In him men saw the Father. He was the self-expression — the translation of God into terms of humanity.

The men who have left us these expressions of their faith on the pages of the New Testament did not present them as theoretic definitions of the interior mystery of Deity or descriptions of the inner constitution of Christ's person. They were voicing a living religious conviction, expressing in terms of their own age what Christ meant to them. They were registering their own experience of his revealing, saving power. In the glorious mystery of his life and death they found all the treasures of spiritual wisdom and knowledge, but they were "hidden" treasures (Col. ii. 3), which could never become accessible, as Pascal says, to mere "curious intellect," but only "to the eyes of the heart and the eyes which see wisdom."[1] And, for myself, I believe that at the end of all our speculation, on the summit of all our theological theorizing, we can do no better than to adopt the language of the early Church and to confess Christ as the Son of God, the revealed Word, the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person, the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.[2]

It is entirely accordant with the variety of forms in which early Christianity expressed its estimates of Christ's person that later interpreters should have found his saving power in different aspects of his life and work. The variety is similar in the two cases and for the same reason. And, yet, there is one fundamental conception of Christ, and one fundamental conception of his salvation. But in order to find it one must go beneath the surface. On neither subject are all the New Testament teachings formally alike. The differences can be properly appreciated only by a historical and critical study of the various writers and their tendencies, and the underlying unities can be apprehended only by recourse to the common ground of faith and experience, in which all the early Christian theologies have their roots. And, in the last analysis, all goes back to the fact that the first disciples of Jesus and their successors had found him to be what he claimed to be — the Saviour, the way to the Father, the Good Shepherd who spared not his life for his own; they had found him to be God's true Son who alone knew the Father, and who alone could bring men into the liberty and peace of sonship to God.

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[1] *Thoughts*, XIX. 1.

[2] The two foregoing paragraphs are transferred, in substance, from the author's book, *The Teaching of Jesus*. Macmillan, 1901.

Speaking of the various ways in which Christian teachers have conceived of Christ and his salvation, Sabatier says: "There is more than one way of connecting the Christian religion with the person and life of Christ. The apostle Paul in his Epistles omits or ignores the entire life of the Master, his miraculous birth, his miracles, his teaching, and connects his gospel with a single fact, — the death of Christ upon the cross. On the other hand, Athanasius and the Greek Church Fathers, inspired by St. John, concentrate all their teaching upon the fact of the birth, or the incarnation of the Word of God, who redeems, renews, and saves human nature, by identifying himself with it and so lifting it to the divine. Still farther, Socinians and rationalists find with St. James the saving word and the essence of the gospel only in the moral teachings of Jesus. Evidently none of these theologians is absolutely wrong, but neither is any one of them exclusively right. The doctrine of the cross, the doctrine of the Incarnate Word, the moral teachings of the parables, and the Sermon on the Mount may all be traced back to a deeper principle of which these doctrines are so many different expressions. The death of Jesus was the blow which broke the alabaster box and set free the divine perfume of his heart, which was renunciation, sacrifice, love. The doctrine of the Word expresses that absolute union with God, that immanence of the Father in him, that sense of divine Sonship, which was the basis of his religious consciousness. And what are his discourses, if not the preaching of that gospel of love and forgiveness which was the outcome of his consciousness, and which made the salvation of sinners depend only upon repentance, trust, and the yielding up of the heart? In the religious consciousness of Jesus, we find the initial divine fact, the creative fact, the seed from which the tree has grown."[1]

[1] *The Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*, pp. 272, 273.

The Christian doctrine of salvation, then, sees in Christ the One in whom the union of God with man is realized. He is the truest, the most real, the only perfect man. As the Head and Representative of our humanity, he is fitted to be the Saviour. But he is also the interpreter of God to us — the revealer of the divine will, nature and requirements. He is thus able to show us what salvation is and to mediate to us the favor of God. He alone of all men perfectly knows what sin is and adequately realizes its evil, because his alone is the perfection in contrast with which sin acquires its meaning and receives its condemnation. He can, therefore, both perfectly sympathize with sinners and perfectly estimate and judge their sin. As the revealer and example of perfect love he unites pity with purity. The love of Jesus is like the white light which discloses the nature of evil and thereby condemns it. Sin is not most truly condemned by mere fury or by the infliction of penalties; it is condemned by disclosure, by the revelation of its real nature against the background of holiness. Perfect love must repudiate and condemn its opposite, but this it accomplishes not by rage and hate, but by turning its heavenly light upon the evil, thereby revealing its enormity.

It was because the life of Jesus was the most perfect copy and embodiment in humanity of the eternal life of God, that he illustrated at once the deepest compassion for sinners and the truest and most searching disclosure of their sins. It is only in the light of his holy love that we see our sins as they are in the eyes of God. There never was any other "manifestation of God's righteousness" and of sin's nature in the light of it, which is comparable to that which Jesus made in his life and death of suffering, sacrificial love. Nowhere was sin ever so revealed, judged, and condemned as at the cross of Christ. We never truly know what sin is until we know what love is and can do. The death of Christ is the final seal and consummate attestation of the divine love and therefore the supreme disclosure and condemnation of sin. God's judgment upon sin is wrought by the holy and pitying love which stoops to conquer it.

CHAPTER III

THE SIN FROM WHICH CHRIST SAVES

In the teaching of Jesus sin is described as the loss of the soul, or, according to the Revised Version, as the forfeiture of the life (Mk. viii. 37). Again, the sinner is said to "lose or forfeit his own self" (Lk. ix. 25). Hence those who live in sin are described as "lost" — lost to the true meaning and ends of life. The sinner is like a sheep that has wandered away from the flock into the mountains — like a son who has banished himself from his home and his father. But Jesus spoke of sin not so much in general as in concrete terms. The particular sins to which he referred most pointedly were pride, hypocrisy, resentment, and unmercifulness. Nothing was so sinful in his eyes as a selfish and malicious heart; the worst sins to him were sins of disposition. The self-righteous Pharisee cloaking deceit and selfishness under an ostentatious religiousness; the purse-proud miser gloating over his possessions; the pitiless priest and levite whose prejudice had consumed their humanity; the merciless servant who, though "much forgiven," refused himself to forgive — these were the typical embodiments of sin in the view of Jesus. All sin has its seat in the heart, that is, in the inner life, in a perversion and corruption of the will. Sin is not primarily a matter of action, but of character. Man is defiled by the evil thoughts and desires which proceed from within. Hate is the source of murder. Lust is the essence of adultery. If men are justified or condemned by their words and deeds, it is because it is out of the inner treasury of thought and motive that good and evil deeds alike proceed — because it is "out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh."

In the Fourth Gospel the terms in which Jesus' teaching concerning sin is construed are different, but their import is essentially the same. Here, too, the sinful world is lost in alienation from God ; sin is moral darkness, or moral bondage. Christ came to save the world, to bring to it the heavenly light, to release the enslaved wills and hearts of men into the freedom which the truth gives. As man's true life consists in sonship to God, that is, in moral kinship and likeness to him, so sin is described as a sonship to Satan (Jn. viii. 44), a radical inner perversion, a blindness in mind and heart to truth and to goodness. This is but a graphic description of that perversion of the inner vision — the evil eye which sees all things false — the dim or broken lamp which leaves "the whole body full of darkness" (Mt. vi. 22).

Jesus made little or no reference to what we call the "problems" of sin — its beginning, its relation to heredity, to physical death, or outward calamities. He held himself entirely aloof from the fruitless disputes on these subjects which were rife in the Jewish schools of his time and refused to be drawn into controversy concerning them. When asked whether those on whom the tower in Siloam fell were sinners above all others in Jerusalem, he replied in the negative, and added only a warning of the consequences of impenitence (Lk. xiii. 4). The Johannine tradition likewise reports him as repudiating the current view that congenital blindness was the penalty of some particular sin (Jn. ix. 2, 3). To the first appearance of sin in the world he made no reference. His words contain no allusion to Adam or the Fall.[1] He never intimates that men are guilty for the sins of their ancestors immediate or remote. He does not touch upon the disputed question whether or not physical death is the consequence of sin. There could be no better proof that no particular theory concerning these points is essential to Christian belief than is afforded by this silence of Jesus.

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[1] There may be a remote allusion to the Fall-narrative in the reference to Satan as being a "murderer from the beginning" (Jn. viii. 44), but, in any case, it is brought into no relation to the question as to the origin of sin.

Our Lord spoke of sin as a fact of experience. He described it in its real character and effects. He neither exaggerated nor minimized its nature. He did not regard men — even the worst of them — as utterly sinful. He could find at least a spark of goodness in the most depraved life. He knew nothing of such artificial distinctions as that made by theologians between natural and spiritual goodness, according to which men may be described as totally depraved religiously, however numerous and great their civil virtues, such as uprightness, generosity, and charity. On the other hand, none ever estimated sin so seriously and truly. Sins were something more to him than excusable mistakes or incidental lapses. He recognized the existence of sin, as well as of sins. Individual sins have their root and source in the depraved heart — in the sinful character. The tree is known by its fruit. Sins are but the symptoms of the disease. Sin is the ruination of the moral health; it is an abnormal state of life; more specifically, it is disharmony with God; it is essential unreason, absurdity; it is, as the biblical words for it indicate, a missing of the mark, a false aim — an effort to realize the good by the renunciation of the right and the true.

Jesus never defined sin abstractly, but always viewed and pictured it in its actual manifestations. He exhibited its nature and heinousness by contrast with goodness. Hence, as we have seen, he spoke more of the true life than of its loss or perversion. His primary emphasis was upon the good life which opens before every man. Men are to be saved from sin by recovery to goodness. The only cure of error is truth; the only salvation from evil is through the realization of righteousness. Sin is unlikeness to God; salvation is likeness to him. Sin is the unfilial life, the life of self-banishment from the soul's true home in God; salvation is found in return to the Father's house and in the life of obedient sonship. Hence Jesus summarized all goodness and all duty in love to

God, or in sonship to God. Be the sons of your Father in heaven, he said to men; become like him in the motives and spirit of your action; learn what God is and you will know what God requires; be his true children and all else will follow. The reason he gave for not sinning was that it was unfilial: Cease from your hatreds, your cruelties, and narrowness. Why? Because it is unlike God. Love all men, even your enemies; be generous and charitable. Why? In order that by so doing you may become the true sons of God, may prove yourselves to be truly kindred to him in thought and action, for he loves and blesses all, even the unworthy and the unthankful. Godlikeness, then, is the deep foundation of all goodness; to be like God, — that is the reason for the good life on which all other reasons rest. By contrast, sin is the forfeiture of the Godlike life and the curse of it is that it separates man from God, gives him a wrong direction, and dooms him to moral failure. Jesus held up before men the consequences of their sin — the misery, the penalties, the fiery Gehenna of remorse and shame — to these he pointed in solemn warning. But why do these consequences follow sin? Because of what sin *is;* because it is a perversion of man's true nature, a repudiation of his destiny as a son of God. This is the Christian doctrine of sin; this is the evil, the terrible and disastrous loss — the loss of man's true self — from which Jesus came to save him.

When we turn to the writings of Paul the principal peculiarities which we note in his doctrine of sin are these: (1) He is accustomed to personify sin and to describe it as a world-ruling power. (2) He traces its beginning back to Adam, conceives it as entering the world in his transgression, and spreading itself thence upon all mankind. (3) He regards physical death as due to sin, and (4) he associates sin with the flesh in which he conceives moral evil as having its seat and sphere of manifestation.[1] All these characteristics of Paul's thought are capable of explanation, either by the peculiarities of his mind or by the nature of his training. The personification of sin is, of course, a realistic rhetorical figure. Sin enters the world and takes possession of men so that, as Paul expresses it, it is no longer they who govern themselves, but the sin which has mastered them. The proper ego, the better self, is suppressed and vanquished, and sin rules the life. If the inner man, the law of the reason, protests against this dominion, it is, nevertheless, powerless to break it. In vain does the enslaved will yearn to be free; sin is master; it is no longer the man himself who acts, but sin which dwells in him (Rom. vii. 7–25). In this picture of sin's power we have a transcript of the apostle's own pre-Christian experience when he was vainly seeking peace and victory over evil by deeds of obedience to the law. Psychologically speaking, it is a graphic portrayal of that evil bias or radical perversion of the will which constitutes the very essence of sin. The clash of opposing impulses in the soul is objectified and seen as a conflict of the man himself with a power invading his life from without. The bitter strife seems like a grapple with a personal foe. Carry the personification a step farther and you have the form of thought in which men have always represented moral struggle, as a conflict with a personal enemy, a black demon or wily Satan, as in Bunyan's description of the battle between Christian and Apollyon.

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[1] For a historical and critical study of these peculiarities of the Pauline doctrine see Tennant, *The Sources of the Doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin*, ch. xi.

Paul's allusions to Adam and the Fall are purely incidental. In writing of the resurrection he says: "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22), and in his argument to show that the grace of God in Christ is more than a match for the power of sin, he declares that as sin and death entered the world by the transgression of Adam, so righteousness and life have come to men through the work of the second Adam, Jesus Christ (Rom. v. 12–19). He makes only this illustrative use of the Fall-narrative and does not indicate how he conceives the relation of the first sin to all subsequent transgressions. It cannot, therefore, be maintained that any particular conjecture which we may make regarding the nature of this relation is essential to Paul's doctrine. Whether the sins of men in general be connected with the first sin by realistic identification, constructive imputation, heredity, or a figure of speech — each theory is powerless to prove itself Pauline. Some speculations on this subject are, indeed, less absurd than others; some are more germane to Paul's thought-world than others; but Paul has offered us no theory of "original sin."[1]

That Paul should have conceived the beginning of sin in a manner determined by the current Jewish understanding of the third chapter of Genesis was, of course, inevitable. But this current interpretation of the Fall-story had considerably modified and elaborated the original narrative. The story in Genesis does not represent Adam's nature or moral condition as essentially changed by his disobedience. The consequences of his sin are primarily physical — subjection to the ills of human life. There is no intimation that Adam's sin was the source or explanation of the sinfulness of his descendants; in fact, this idea is foreign to the whole Old Testament. The later Jewish theory — of which Christian theology has made such ample use — that by the first sin a root of evil was implanted in human nature, is not suggested in the Fall-story. Cain's sin was due to his own choice alone; the guilt of it rested solely upon himself, and he was guilty for no sin but his own. The sin of Adam and Eve is viewed in the ancient Hebrew legend as the first of an ascending series — the fratricide of Cain, the intensified brutality of Lamech, and the general corruption which occasioned the flood.

It is a disputed point whether in Genesis Adam's mortality is traced to his sin, and if so, in what sense. The sayings: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," and: "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die" (Gen. ii. 17; iii. 3), are commonly supposed to refer to physical death. On the other hand, death did not ensue at once upon sin, as threatened, — a circumstance which might have suggested the common Jewish theory that death was not *caused* but *hastened* by sin. Moreover, creaturely weakness seems to imply liability to death: "For out of the ground wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. iii. 19). It is also to be remembered that Adam and Eve had not yet eaten of the fruit of the tree of life which was to confer exemption from death. This would seem to imply that they were naturally subject to it. In any case, the view of the Old Testament as a whole is that death is natural to man. Violent or premature death may be the wages of sin, but physical dissolution is assumed to be due to creaturely limitations.[1] Whatever view be taken on this point, however, it is quite clear that Paul associated with the first transgression two consequences: (1) the general prevalence of sin in the world, and (2) the universal reign of physical death.

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[1] I have advanced my own conjectures as to how Paul probably conceived the relation in question in *The Pauline Theology*, ch. vi, and observe that Mr. Tennant thinks them as feasible as any. *Op. cit.*, pp. 253–263.

It may be well enough to mention here the principal forms of late Jewish speculation concerning the origin and dissemination of sin.[2] One theory was built upon the legend, in Gen. vi. 1–6, of the union of "the sons of God," or heavenly "watchers," as they were called, with the daughters of men, from which union sprang a race of giants, who were tainted by the evil passions which had occasioned their procreation. Another view referred the introduction of sin to Adam and Eve, but regarded their transgression as the source, to others, of physical rather than of moral evils. By some the fact of physical death, by others the hastening of it, was ascribed to Adam's sin; later thought attributed mainly spiritual consequences to his transgression. But the notion of a native evil inclination, implanted in man by the Creator from the beginning, was also influential.[3] How the apostle's thought stood related to these various speculations in detail we have no means of knowing, but we can confidently say that there is little in common between Paul's doctrine of sin and late Jewish thought except in the two points named above. In these particulars, however, he has taken over certain Jewish beliefs popularly associated with the Fall-story in Genesis, rather than had direct recourse to the narrative itself.

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[1] So Charles, Tennant, Porter.

[2] For details, see Tennant, *op. cit.*, *passim.*

[3] *Cf.* Professor F. C. Porter, "The Yeçer Hara, A Study of the Jewish Doctrine of Sin," in the Yale Bicentennial Volume, *Biblical and Semitic Studies*, p. 133.

But these points have an antiquarian, rather than a practical, interest. They are never dwelt upon or elaborated by Paul; they do not affect the organism of his thought or determine the character of his doctrine of salvation. For the most part he treats sin practically and experimentally. It is time to inquire what the essence of his working theory is. This we can learn from his picture of the sinful world in the opening chapters of Romans. The principal forms or manifestations of sin which he there describes are as follows: a repression of the truth, a self-blinding, a refusal to follow the light which one has; a foolish pride and self-sufficiency, base ingratitude, and wilful indifference to the knowledge of God; corrupt and selfish passions, such as cruelty and hate, and, perhaps, worst of all, an assumed superiority and self-righteous contempt of others. Farther on in the same Epistle he associates sin with the flesh. Sin reigns in the body of the sinner and makes his members instruments of unrighteousness; it is a law in the members which wages war against the law of the reason; it creates a "mind of the flesh" which engenders spiritual death, so that to "live after the flesh," to be dominated by the sin which rules in the flesh, is to forfeit the life and liberty of sonship to God.

It seems to some that Paul here adopts the theory that sin consists in sensuousness — that its essence is found in the carnal impulses. It was a common belief among Greek philosophers that matter was an evil principle, and that therefore the body had in it the seeds of sin. Some interpreters maintain that Paul had become acquainted with this theory, as held, for example, by Philo, and had appropriated it, so that he really offers two explanations of the origin of sin, the current Jewish explanation, which referred it to Adam, and the Greek dualistic theory, which found in the material body the principle of evil.[1] This view is, I think, untenable, for the following reasons: (1) Paul did not identify sin with the flesh or the body. The flesh is a sphere of sin's manifestation, but the flesh and sin are never synonymous. (2) The body is capable of sanctification and even of glorification. Its members may be, and should be made, instruments of righteousness. (3) Paul does not advocate asceticism, as he must have done if he had regarded the body as essentially evil. The flesh is, indeed, to be crucified, but by that is meant that it should be subordinated to the uses and requirements of the spirit. While, therefore, the apostle closely associates sin with the flesh, and regards the impulses of the latter as furnishing a potent incentive to sin, he does not place the seat of sin in the body or set forth his doctrine of the flesh as furnishing an explanation of the origin of sin.

What, then, is sin, according to Paul? Of course, we look in vain for any formal definition. We must search for his idea, underlying his various popular forms of speech, as we searched for Jesus' idea — by asking what was his conception of goodness. Sin is the opposite of goodness, righteousness, virtue. If we know what Paul's conception of moral perfection was, we need be in no doubt in respect to his view of the essence of sin. Now for Paul the *summum bonum* is love; that is "the way of surpassing excellence," the most comprehensive and fundamental heavenly gift, the virtue on which all other virtues rest. He has told us what love is, and how it acts. Patient, humble, generous, true, and hopeful, love never fails; it is the eternal, abiding substance of all goodness. It is the greatest of virtues, because the most permanent and inclusive; it is the essence of moral perfection; its completion would be the realization of "that which is perfect." What is this but the doctrine of John that love is of God, nay, that God is love, and that he that loveth is born of God and knoweth God, — that to love one's brethren is to walk in the light, — that the burden of Jesus' message is the commandment of love, and that the goal of all Christian aspiration and effort is that the love of God should be perfected in us? And what are these teachings of Paul and John alike but versions of the sayings of Jesus that love is the substance of all laws and commandments, and that the Christian ideal is to be perfect in love as God in heaven is perfect?

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[1] *Cf.* my *Theology of the New Testament*, p. 338 *sq.*, and the references there given.

Now define the opposite of this love which is "the fulfilling of the law," and you have the Christian idea of sin. There may be a reasonable difference of opinion as to what single word would best express this contrast to love. Most present-day theologians have agreed upon the word "selfishness," comprehensively understood, as including all forms of self-will, self-righteousness, and self-glorification. My own opinion is that in his profound analysis of sin Julius Müller has convincingly shown that every form of sin has its root in selfishness, and Paul suggests this view when he says that Christ died to save men in order that they might no longer live unto themselves (2 Cor. v. 15). But whatever may be thought of the word "selfishness" as best expressing the nature of sin, there can be no doubt that it is the equally explicit teaching of Christ, of Paul, and of John that sin is lovelessness; it is the opposite, the contrary of love. Here is Paul's most graphic, concrete description of goodness: "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."[1] Reverse this picture and you would have the description of sin, — harshness, envy, pride, self-seeking, and, perhaps, worst of all, the loss of aspiration for truth and goodness. Place in contrast with the above passage Rom. i. 29–31, beginning, "unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy," etc. Or, place side by side the descriptions of the "fruit of the Spirit" and the "works of the flesh" in Gal. v. 19–23, — on the one side, "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness," etc.; on the other, "uncleanness, enmities, jealousies, envyings," etc. Whatever views Paul may have had of the origin of sin, these contrasted passages show clearly what was his conception of its actual character and manifestations.

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[1] *The Twentieth Century New Testament* renders these phrases: "She is proof against all things, always trustful, always hopeful, always patient." Dr. Weymouth translates: "She knows how to be silent; she is full of trust, full of hope, full of patient endurance."

It is apparent from what has been said that, in his practical use of the doctrine of sin, Paul made no application of the connection of later sins with that of Adam. Whatever views he may have entertained on that point, — and precisely what they were has never been determined, — they are purely incidental and form no essential part of his conception of sin's *nature*, much less of the specifically Christian conception in general. In whatever sense the apostle conceived of all men as being "constituted sinners" by Adam's trespass, he does not describe them as being from birth and by nature guilty sinners and objects of God's wrath. Formerly this idea was deduced from the phrase: "And we (Jews) were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest" (Gentiles) (Eph. ii. 3); but this was done under stress of dogmatic necessity and in defiance both of the context and of Paul's general teaching concerning the natural relation of the Jewish people to God. The interpretation in question has been so amply and repeatedly refuted that it is not necessary to dwell upon the passage here. The meaning is that the Jews have by their evil manner of life, in the course of their sinful moral development (φύσει), made themselves the objects of God's wrath, as really as the Gentiles are.[1] The people of God, the natural branches of the sacred olive tree, who should have been the "beloved" of God (Rom. xi. 28), have become "sons of disobedience" and so "children of wrath."[1]

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[1] So, *e.g.*, Meyer, Weiss, von Soden, T. K. Abbott, and Tennant, *in loco*. A summary of the argument for this interpretation may be found in my *Pauline Theology*, pp. 152–157, or in my *Theology of the New Testa-*

The apostle certainly took a most serious view of sin, its heinousness, guilt, universality, and terrible consequences; yet he did not describe men as utterly destitute of goodness. Even the depraved heathen not only had a law of God written on their hearts to whose meaning and authority they were not totally blind; but, in some cases at least, more or less fully obeyed its requirements (Rom. ii. 14). The Book of Acts represents Paul as recognizing in the more than ordinary religiousness of the Athenians a point of approach for the gospel — a capacity for a more enlightened piety.[2] There is no reason to doubt that Paul could have subscribed the modern, mitigated definition of "total depravity," which explains it *extensively* as meaning that sin pervades, affects, and corrupts the *total* man, all his powers and faculties. But the genuine, historic doctrine of *intensive* total depravity, as taught, for example, by Augustine and Edwards, and embodied in the Westminster Catechism,[3] is an exaggera-

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ment, pp. 359, 360. Dr. Armitage Robinson understands φύσει to mean, as they are "in themselves," *i.e.*, apart from divine aid. His interpretation comes to the same practical result as that mentioned above.

[1] It has often been assumed because Paul here uses the word "children" (τέκνα ὀργῆς), that he is speaking of the sinfulness of young children or infants. Of course this idea is utterly baseless. By "children of wrath" is meant, according to a common Hebraistic idiom, objects or recipients of wrath. Compare the phrase "children of the promise" (Rom. ix. 8), that is to say, those on whom the promise is fulfilled.

[2] Acts xvii. 22: "Men of Athens, I perceive that you are in every respect remarkably religious" (Weymouth); "On every hand I see signs of your being very religious" (*Twentieth Century New Testament*). The R. V. in rendering "somewhat superstitious" only partially corrects the mistranslation of the A. V. "too superstitious." The Am. R. V. has set the matter right, "very religious."

[3] Q. 25. "The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consisteth in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of that righteousness wherein he was created, and the corruption of his nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined unto all evil, and that continually; which is commonly called original sin, and from which do proceed all actual trans-

tion even of Paul's strenuous doctrine. It is a fair question whether this form of the doctrine does not logically exclude from man all capacity for redemption. If the natural man is wholly inclined to all evil, and that incessantly; if there is in him nothing but moral corruption, no good at all, it is difficult to see why he is not in that case as bad as he can be, and, if so, what is there in him to which the divine love can appeal? He is then, it would seem, absolutely dead in trespasses and sins — as incapable of response to the grace of God as a corpse is irresponsive to the touch. The doctrine was often consistently carried out to this result in the old Protestant theology, and regeneration described as a purely dynamic, galvanic act of God of which man is a merely passive recipient. But such a view of human nature is as unwarranted by Paul's teaching as it is opposite to the nature and message of the gospel. Christ's appeal to all men everywhere to repent is made in good faith. Paul always assumes the presence of a capacity in man to heed and respond to the gospel invitation. It may be added that the method of saving the old doctrine of total depravity by holding that there are two wholly different kinds of goodness, is a desperate expedient. It is based on a false, abstract dualism. If there are two kinds of goodness, then there must be two corresponding kinds of sin. If natural or civil righteousness has no excellence and meets no favor in God's eyes, then the absence or violation of it cannot concern or displease him. On this view the whole natural, social, and civil life of man is a kind of neutral sphere with whose duties and relations God is not concerned. It is only in a field of experience and action technically called religious that the terms "good" and "evil" really apply. That Paul thought otherwise is evident from his comments on "civil righteousness" in Rom. xiii. The *reductio ad absurdum* of this doctrine is found in

gressions." Edwards: "Men are totally corrupt in all their faculties and all the principles of their nature; all their senses are only inlets and outlets of sin, channels of corruption. There is nothing but sin, no good at all." Sermon on "The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners."

the sentiment that the virtues of the heathen sages were really but splendid vices, and that the same actions which in a Christian are good, can only be evil in a non-Christian.[1] It is hardly necessary to say that such distinctions are the makeshifts of a desperate dogmatism and are as un-Pauline as they are unphilosophical.

Concerning the Christian doctrine of sin, then, we may say, negatively: (1) It offers no explanation of sin's origin or of the mysterious relation of heredity to the moral life of man. It does not, of course, follow that these are not proper and important subjects of study. But no particular speculation concerning them is entitled to be called a Christian doctrine. The realistic theory elaborated by Augustine has had the widest vogue and is commonly ranked as the orthodox view. According to this conception all men sinned in Adam because all were seminally present in him; he was the summary of the race which had not yet begun to be individualized. But this — besides resting on a literal interpretation of the Genesis-narrative — is only an application of neo-Platonic philosophy which can hardly lay claim to be an authoritative source of Christian teaching. If Paul in Rom. v. 12 meant to say that we sinned in Adam, it must have been in the sense in which the writer of Hebrews declares that Levi paid tithes in his great-grandfather, Abraham — — "so to speak" (Heb. vii. 9). It was not strange that a conservative school of seventeenth-century Calvinists repudiated this explanation as heathen in its origin and irrational in itself. No man, they said, can sin in his ancestors. But what, then, did Paul mean? The answer, said the Federal theologians, is found a few verses farther on, where the apostle says that "through one man's disobedience the many were made (or constituted) sinners." They did not actually sin when Adam sinned, but when he fell, God, by a sovereign dispensation, constituted them sinners; that is, proceeded to regard and treat them as such. But how can God regard, condemn, and punish as sinners those who have not actually, that is, really, sinned at all? Answer: He made a covenant with Adam that he should stand forth as the representative of the race. Mankind should stand or fall with him. If he succumbed to temptation, then all his descendants were to be dealt with *as if* they had committed his sin; that is, were to become the objects of God's wrath and to be exposed to the doom of eternal death. If one asks: How is this fair or just? How can men be condemned for the sin of a representative in whose choice they had no part? Answer, Who art thou that repliest against God?

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[1] The virtues of the heathen moralists are declared by Augustine to be only apparent and counterfeit virtues, and "to be reckoned as vices rather than virtues." *City of God*, XIX. 25.

Such are the historic, orthodox theories of original sin. Each contradicts the other, and both claim to be Pauline. I venture the opinion, however, that Paul's thought had nothing in common with neo-Platonic realism, much less with that series of covenants (mostly made in Holland) by which one school of seventeenth-century Calvinists explained God's dealings with the human race. It is high time that the problem of the origin of sin should be withdrawn from the field of exegesis and theological speculation and remanded to the realm to which it belongs — the scientific investigation of heredity and of moral evolution.[1]

(2) The Christian conception of sin is not that it consists in sensuousness or animalism — an ancient and widespread theory, indeed, but one which, if it has any philosophical foundation at all, must rest at last on a metaphysical dualism which views matter as essentially evil, and is, as Mr. Tennant says, one of the "most perennial and ineradicable of all popular heresies." Nevertheless, it is true that the sensuous impulses are among the most potent incentives to sin, and it may be true that sin began in a failure to control and "moralize" them. This appears to have been the most prevalent Jewish view, and in the judgment of some scholars was the original import

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[1] Such a mode of treatment is illustrated by Tennant, *The Origin and Propagation of Sin;* Pfleiderer, *Religionsphilosophie*, II. 363–399; J. Morris, *A New Natural Theology*, pp. 275–291.

of the Fall-story which we now read, in a comparatively modernized form, in Gen. iii.

We may say positively: (1) that the Christian view of sin rests on the assumption that it is a voluntary affair. Not only does it have its seat in the will; it is a state of the will. It is not merely a series of voluntary acts; it consists rather in the fixed moral preferences; it is a character. Hence sin is not merely error, or weakness, or natural imperfection; it is moral perversity, a false direction. It follows that sin cannot be merely negative — a mere absence of good. Sin is as positive as goodness. It is an act, a choice, a moral condition. It is a self-affirmation, albeit a false affirmation.

But these are formal statements. We may add (2) that sin is discord with God, disharmony with his will and nature, and so an offence against man's own well-being. Sin may be defined as transgression of God's law, but his "law" is not a statutory system. God's law is a name for those demands upon mankind which arise out of his nature and out of the nature of man's relation to him.

(3) It follows, of course, that sin is blameworthy. Guilt, in various degrees, attaches to all sin. Moreover, since sin is a character, every man's sin is his own. This has been denied only by resolving sin into a pale abstraction. When sin is viewed ethically and experimentally, it is self-evident that every man's acts, choices, and character are his own and not another's. He could not inherit them, much less could he perform or acquire them before he existed, and even less still could God reckon them to him in advance in sheer arbitrariness. The newly born infant is not guilty, nor is it the object of God's wrath. No man ever sinned in his ancestors, or in any one of them, whether immediate or remote. A far better argument could be constructed to prove that Adam was guilty for my sin than can be framed to show that I am guilty for his. I submit that, according to all known principles of equity, he is much more likely to be responsible for the consequences of his own sin than I am. No man with any sense of humor could ever set himself to repent of

Adam's sin, and I have never heard of any theologian, even if lacking in that important qualification for his calling, who was ever known to confess his part in what he had, perhaps, demonstrated in his book to be his first, chief, most damning and soul-destroying sin.

(4) Sin is the negation, the opposite, of love. It is the repudiation of the requirements of love; it is selfishness. It is the life of self-banishment from the Father's love and fellowship. This is the specifically Christian conception of sin. To live the life of sin is, according to the Johannine definition, to walk in the darkness, instead of in God's light, and his light is his love. Or, if we speak the language of Paul, sin is the renunciation of the duties and obligations of love, which is the crown of the virtues, the bond of perfectness, the fulfilling of the law. This is but saying in other, but equivalent, words what our Lord teaches. If love is the sum and substance of all laws and commandments, then lovelessness is the essence of sin.

One question remains, What would constitute salvation from sin thus defined? When sin is viewed as an accumulation of back debts, we very naturally speak of some provision for their cancellation. If our sinful characters are best described as a kind of old score, then we need some bookkeeping analogy to show how our account may be balanced or our indebtedness expunged. Or if sin is best described as a breach of the Sovereign's code of honor, a supreme personal insult, then, of course, salvation must be provided for by some reparation. Or if, again, sin is to be described as a crime, an offence against the divine legislation, then the analogy would suggest that the first requisite is the infliction of the statutory penalty. Or, once more, if sin is something quantitatively infinite, then the notion of a quantitative satisfaction for it lies near to hand. But if these are only figures of speech, and some of them rather infelicitous and misleading figures at that, then the descriptions of salvation which are based upon them will seem the more inappropriate and unsatisfactory. If sin is a moral state, a character, what can save from it but a change of life, and what means and measures are adapted to that end except those which help us into a new character? How can sin be overcome except by being replaced? How can plans, schemes, balances, or even forgiveness, serve really to save us to our true life and destiny as sons of God except so far as they bring us into harmony with him and into loyalty to his truth? Salvation is not primarily a legal *status*, but a moral relation to God. Salvation from sin is therefore recovery to right relations to God, to the life of love, obedience, and sonship. This is the work for which Christ came, lived, labored, suffered, and died.

CHAPTER IV

THE NATURE AND ENDS OF PUNISHMENT

THERE are almost as many theories of punishment as there are theories of atonement. Anselm, as we have seen, regarded punishment as the avenging of a private wrong; Grotius as a testimony to God's displeasure at sin; the penal satisfactionists as pain inflicted in vindication of justice, while many modern writers would define it as paternal discipline or chastisement. There are equally varying conceptions of the necessity and object of punishment. For Anselm it was necessary in order to make reparation for an insult and so to vindicate the divine dignity; for Grotius its object was to impress upon God's creatures the majesty of his law and so to deter them from further offences; in the old Protestant theology punishment was regarded as an end in itself; it is inflicted simply because it is deserved and, therefore, must be inflicted; modern "benevolencism"[1] regards it as a factor in God's administration of the world, and sees in it a means to an end beyond itself, the reformation or recovery of its object to a better life.

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[1] I owe this term to Professor Warfield, who uses it to designate what he calls "the prevailing gospel of the indiscriminate love of God" — a gospel whose prevalence he deeply deplores. Elsewhere in explanation of the word "indiscriminate" he adds the term "undiscriminating," and characterizes the "gospel" in question as the doctrine that "God is love and nothing but love." "Certainly such a God," declares Dr. Warfield, "cannot need propitiating," and in the idea of a God who does not need to be appeased by penal suffering he finds the fruitful source of theological error. *Princeton Theological Review*, January, 1903, pp. 89, 90. The implication, however, that those who do not believe in a God who "needs propitiating," do therefore believe in a God who is mere genial good nature and who is indifferent to sin, is not borne out by any view or theory which I have met with in a somewhat extended reading of the modern literature of the subject.

These theories of punishment are so interwoven with the problems respecting the nature and method of salvation that it seems necessary, at this stage, to review them somewhat in detail. It is obvious that the problem as to the nature of penalty is primary for that conception of atonement which holds that the death of Christ was a strict equivalent to the penalty of sin and was designed to obtain, by another method, the same end which the infliction of penalty would have secured. On this view atonement can only be defined in the light of what penalty is. Define the nature and end of punishment and you have defined the necessity and object of Christ's death. If the theory is one of precise equivalence in quantity or significance between atonement and penalty, then the principle which we have just stated holds without qualification. But in proportion as the death of Christ is held to be penal in some indefinite sense, and the equivalence between his sufferings and the deserts of sin is no longer an equivalence in amount, kind, or character, but *per acceptationem*, in that proportion will the definition of punishment cease to be the guiding light by which the work of salvation is interpreted. We can best illustrate the different phases of doctrine to which we refer by considering first the theory of punishment as designed solely to vindicate and satisfy retributive justice.

According to the theory in question punishment is "pain inflicted because of guilt" in order to satisfy justice — "pain or loss which is directly or indirectly inflicted by the Law-giver, in vindication of his justice outraged by the violation of law."[1] Dr. Shedd gives as an illustration of this conception of punishment the maxim: "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," which, he says, our Lord approved and sanctioned. All that he objected to, declares Dr. Shedd, was the enforcement of the principle by the individual, who exceeds his rights when he undertakes the work of retribution. But society or the state, which is ordained by God, may with perfect propriety adopt and apply the maxim in question; much more is it, in the opinion of this theologian, perfectly accordant with the Christian conception of God that he should make it the principle of his administration. If, then, Christ enthroned the *lex talionis* by "placing its execution upon the proper basis," and if it is "dispassionate and right" for the government (and much more for God himself whose authority lies behind the government) to "put out the eye of him who has put out an eye," two questions arise: (1) Why does not God act on this supremely just principle since "justice must be exercised always and everywhere"? and: (2) Is it not positively wrong for him (on the assumptions of a theology like Dr. Shedd's) thus to fail to do what is "right"? It is characteristic of the purely *a priori* treatment of the subject of penalty illustrated by writers like Dr. Shedd, that questions of this sort are not considered. The exposition continues: Punishment has but one aim, the satisfaction of justice; it is not intended or expected to do the person punished any good. Indeed, it is inconceivable that it should have this result, since suffering which benefits the sufferer is, *ipso facto*, only chastisement, and not punishment. Punishment is for its own sake; in it "the criminal is sacrificed to justice." Now two things are essential to the idea of penalty: it must be *equivalent* to the offence, and it must be *intended* and *felt* as retributive. A fine for a murder would not be just; an eye for a tooth would not be fair. The same suffering may be penal to one man and disciplinary to another; if it is intended to be penal and is felt to be penal, then it *is* penal; otherwise, it is not penal. Physical death is a penalty for sin to the wicked man and a chastisement to the good man.[1]

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[1] Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, II. 422; Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 350. So Hodge, Dale, and many others.

Dr. Strong has elaborated the same theory, but with less of logical stringency and consistency. "Punishment," he says, "is essentially different from chastisement; the latter proceeds from love; punishment proceeds not from love, but from justice." Accordingly we are told that "penalty is not essentially reformatory," nor is it "essentially deterrent and preventive." Chastisement is the "rod of God's mercy"; penalty is the "rod of his anger and fury." Now when these statements are placed side by side, they form a curious specimen of reasoning. First we are told that punishment is "essentially different" from chastisement, that is, that it is *essentially* non-reformatory and non-deterrent, and then we are told that it is *not essentially* reformatory or deterrent, — such is not its "primary design," — but it is admitted that it may incidentally have that design and effect,[1] that is: (1) A is *essentially different* from B. But (2) though A is *not essentially the same* as B, yet "incidentally" A may have some of the qualities and effects of B. I am not sure under which rubric the professional logicians classify this particular form of the syllogism. However, I will at present waive the right — which one might exercise — to raise any formal objections against these definitions and will content myself with pointing out the psychological peculiarity of this description of God's nature and method. We have to remember that this theology defines love and justice as entirely separate and independent attributes and powers. God's moral nature is composed of these two disparate factors. Each of these potencies functions by itself. Justice enacts punishment, and love practises discipline or chastisement. On sinners justice plies the "rod of God's anger and fury," while on the saints love lays the chastening "rod of his mercy and goodness." In dealing with sin and sinners, then, God is all justice, vengeance, and punishment. The consequences of their sin which he "inflicts" are not intended to do them any good; but if, nevertheless, they should "incidentally" have some beneficial effect, that would simply prove that the punishment was not *quo ad hoc* punishment after all. Advocates of the theory, while admitting, in defiance of their definitions, the hypothetical possibility of such a result, would clearly regard its actual occurrence (if it became known) as surprising, if not positively disappointing. But the only point which I would now urge upon the reader's attention is this: Do not fail to note the conception of God which lies behind this exposition. His whole relation to sin and sinners is exhausted by the conception of retributive justice. He deals with sin only with the rod of his fury. "Justice is independent of love in God, and superior to it" — let not that master light of all our seeing in this field be lost from view. In visiting upon sin its consequences God has no concern or intention looking to the advantage of the sinner; he is bent solely upon getting even with him. His motto is, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

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[1] *Op. cit.*, II. 422–424.

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[1] "These ends (of moral betterment and prevention) *may be incidentally secured through its infliction*, but the *great end* of penalty is the vindication of the character of the Law-giver." *Op. cit.*, p. 351. Minor or subordinate ends of punishment may therefore be the reformation of the sinner and the prevention of sin in others, and yet the idea of punishment is defined as excluding these conceptions; it is said to be of an *essentially different kind* from a reformatory or preventive process.

Dr. Dale's argument for the same general theory is to this effect: (1) Punishment cannot be "a reformatory process," because if it were "that and nothing more," "the severity of punishment would have to be measured, not by the magnitude of the sin for which it is inflicted, but by the difficulty of inducing the sinner to amend." (2) The sinner "must deserve to be punished, or the law has no right to punish him." (3) Nor is the primary design of penalty to deter others from sin or crime, though it may have that effect. Punishment, then, is "pain and loss inflicted for the violation of law."[1] We naturally ask here several questions: Are all possible reformatory results to be denied to punishment? If so, must God punish all sin? Must punitive justice, as Drs. Shedd and Strong assert, be exercised everywhere? And, if so, how then can God forgive at all? Dr. Dale appears to take the same view upon the first point as the authors previously quoted. "Punishment," he says, "inflicted upon a man to make him better in the future is not punishment, but discipline; to be punishment, it must be inflicted for evil deeds done in the past."[2] And yet, this is not quite equivalent to saying that punishment and discipline are "essentially different," and that punishment must therefore be purely vindicative and can have no incidental or secondary disciplinary intention or effect. Elsewhere Dr. Dale seeks to show that the theory is "utterly rotten" which grounds punishment *solely* upon expediency, and regards it as reformatory "and nothing more." His argument is that punishment is not *grounded* on utility, but I cannot discover that he anywhere quite denies that it *may*, nevertheless, prove morally useful to those who are punished. I am the more inclined to think that he does consciously admit this possibility from his explicit assertion that punishment may have the effect "to diminish crime." He affirms that the punishment of crime does "benefit the public."[1] Well then, can it be proven that it *might not* benefit the person punished? Is not he a part of "the public"? And if punishment may have a deterrent value, how can it be proven that it was not *designed* to have it? True, Dr. Dale affirms that suffering inflicted with the *design* of reforming or improving the sinner is discipline and not punishment. That statement makes the difference between punishment and discipline to hinge upon the intention lying in the mind of the Lawgiver and leaves open the possibility, at least, that the suffering which is intended to vindicate law may in fact also do the people punished some good. I cannot see that Dr. Dale has shut out this possibility by any of his definitions. Now assuming that he does admit this possibility (as Dr. Strong explicitly does, in spite of his previous assertions), then you have this curious situation: God designs the consequences of sin solely for vindicatory purposes, but, incidentally and subordinately, they may have, and, presumably, sometimes do have, a beneficial moral effect on the punished, though this is *per accidens* and lies outside the divine intention. Or, in other words, in so far as the consequences of sin are merely retributive, they are penal, and in so far as they are reformatory or useful, they are disciplinary, and the degree in which they are the one or the other depends upon the subjective intentions of the Lawgiver in ordaining these consequences. That amounts to this: We have two words, "punishment" and "discipline," by which we describe the results of sin; we have formally and abstractly defined and distinguished them, but as the ground of the distinction lies in the divine intention and not in any known or knowable effect, we can never tell, in point of fact, which is which. The distinction is available for no purpose except that of formal, abstract reasoning. If, on the other hand, we had been plainly told that punishment is so essentially different from chastisement that, in no case, could it have any of its qualities or effects, then all would have been, so far, clear. And possibly, this *is* the position which Dr. Dale intends to take up; if so, it is not consistently maintained nor are its logical consequences developed.

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[1] *Atonement*, pp. 373–383.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 383.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 377.

Our next question, whether the "eternal law of righteousness" must assert itself in vindicatory punishment, Dr. Dale weighs and balances for a long time before he answers it. "Is it then inevitable that God should inflict the penalties which sin has deserved? Has he no choice? Is it impossible that he should be merciful? Does he act as a blind, unconscious force? Is the government of the universe a vast and awful mechanism," etc.? One sees from the parallelism here that Dr. Dale considers it self-evident that when you say: God has no choice; he must unconditionally punish all sin, — you are virtually saying that God cannot be merciful and that he *does* act as a blind, unconscious force. We can know in advance, therefore, how he must answer his own questions. We can already see that his absolute theory of punishment (assuming that he started out to hold it uncompromisingly) is beginning to break down. He qualified it by admitting the deterrent intention and effect of penalty and left a loop-hole by which even the disciplinary element might enter. He frankly adopted one Grotian element in his description of penalty; it speedily leavens the whole lump. Hence he answers: It is *not* necessary that God should punish. True, sin deserves to be punished, but God is not compelled to treat sinners in strict accordance with their deserts. He may be, and, in point of fact, is, gracious. What, then, must he do? Can he forgive unconditionally? No; he must assert the principle that *sin deserves to be punished* in some other way than by punishing it[1]; by "some other act of at least equal intensity," he must express the ill desert of sin. This he does in the sufferings and death of Christ. Notice that the death of Christ is here described, not as punishment, but as a substitute for punishment — an "assertion" of the principle that sin deserves to be punished. In this connection there is not a word about Christ's sufferings being "penal." Indeed to assert that they were so, would be to answer the questions just cited affirmatively, that is, to say that God must punish, has no choice, acts as a blind, unconscious force, etc. The theory that issues from these considerations is the governmental theory pure and simple. Christ's sufferings are not penal, but are as effective an assertion of the majesty of the law as punishment would be. Though starting at the same point as Drs. Shedd and Strong in his philosophy of punishment, Dr. Dale issues in a widely different result. He admits into his conception of punishment elements which make it impossible for him, despite his best endeavors, to reach the penal theory of atonement on that path. I have previously pointed out that Dr. Strong was not quite uncompromising enough in his definitions of punishment for the good of his theory of penal satisfaction, but, nevertheless, he overleaped the obstacles created by his own logic and succeeded in reaching the goal which Dr. Dale could not achieve. It is only fair to say, however, that what Dr. Dale was prevented from doing by his philosophy of penalty he succeeded in accomplishing by other means. In the next chapter, where he approaches the subject from another angle, this author adopts the penal theory *in toto*. Here Christ's death is no longer a mere acknowledgment or assertion of the desert of sin, but an actual endurance of penalty: "Christ did not merely acknowledge that we deserved to suffer. He *endured the penalties of sin*, and so made an actual submission to the authority and righteousness of the principle which those penalties express." "On the cross he submitted to the *actual penalty of sin*."[1] But this is not all. Elsewhere Dr. Dale also adopts Mr. Maurice's theory of Christ's representative headship, which differs as widely from both the other theories as they do from one another. There is, perhaps, a certain advantage in holding several different theories all at once; one may suppose that the truth is the more likely to lie somewhere among them. But this is by the way.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 391.

On the general philosophy of punishment which I have thus sketched I would offer the following suggestions and comments: (1) Is there not something inadequate and even misleading in the conception of a divine "infliction" of penalty, as if it were of the nature of a laying on of stripes? The customary definition has a strong suggestion of human corporal punishment.

(2) The theory in question proceeds as if God's law were a kind of statutory system, an authority above God himself, with which he must reckon, and to which he must do justice. No doubt it would be allowed that such conceptions are only figurative, being based on human analogies, but I question whether they are not treated, in practice, as strictly available categories. The consequences of sin are described as penalties which God inflicts for violation of his legislation.

(3) Not only does the theory represent God's avenging justice as having no end beyond itself, — as serving no purpose but its own self-maintenance, — but it also hypostatizes this quality or attribute of God, and then exalts it into a kind of Nemesis to which God is subject. God must obey the stern commands of this theological abstraction. Moreover, the theory rests on the notion of a dualism in God — as when discipline is said to proceed from his love and punishment from his justice — the only ethical

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[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 423, 424.

unity in his nature being secured by defining justice as predominating over all rival and contending attributes. This is very much the same kind of unity as that which ancient mythology secured among the warring divinities of Olympus by proclaiming Zeus to be superior to all the rest.

(4) If, now, we adopt these human analogies of statutes and stripes and lashes, as illustrating the method of God's government, and then add that the most distinguishing peculiarity of the Almighty is his appetite for revenge, we shall have the proper logic of the theory under review, namely, that it is perfectly reasonable (why not, indeed, necessary?) to conceive that God should treat sinful man in sheer, naked, retributive justice, on the principle of primitive legislation: "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Jesus taught, according to Dr. Shedd, that this maxim was worthy to be applied not only by human states and societies, but in the divine administration of the world. The logic of the theory is seldom carried out so rigorously. But the question which I would raise is: If the enforcement of the *lex retributionis*, or even of the *lex talionis*, is the primary essential of God's government, what likelihood is there that in a sinful race there will be any who will ever be able to sing: "Thou hast not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities"?

(5) It is not very difficult to write abstract definitions of punishment and chastisement and of the difference between them, but I venture to doubt whether it is a very useful industry. It is easy to say that when God "inflicts" a stripe with such and such an intention, the proper name for it is "punishment" (see our previous definition of this term), but when he imposes the same suffering with another purpose, it should be called "chastisement." This piece of information may possibly have some lexicographical interest. But the suggestion which I would make is this: Let the theologians whose definitions we are reviewing take some term which they have not defined in advance, say, "the moral consequences of sin,"

and tell us, in case they know, what consequences are disciplinary and what merely compensatory; let them define the nature and object of the *consequences of sin* and inform us whether these consequences ever can, ever do, or ever are intended to secure any moral benefit to sinners. Leave off your human analogies of lashes and stripes laid on from without; abandon your logical abstractions of an hypostasis called "the Law," which God must obey or protect; lay aside your *a priori* definitions of punishment and chastisement, and tell us whether or not God ever aims to secure, ever can or does secure, through the consequences of sin, any moral advantage to the sinner. It can move no man's gratitude to be informed that in so far as these consequences are vindicatory they are called punishment, and in so far as they are reformatory the right name for them is discipline. Do the established consequences of sin never do those who experience them any good? If the answer is negative, I would then ask: How do you know? Is it because such a result would be contrary to your ready-made definition? If the answer is that, even punishment may, perhaps, "indirectly," or "incidentally" work moral improvement in the recipient or in others, then the theory under review breaks down. But Dr. Strong and Dr. Dale left the door open for this fatal admission (not so, however, Dr. Shedd). If the answer is: God secures only vengeance by punishment, though he may secure improvement by discipline, then we must insist that this is only the familiar but unprofitable truism over again: He secures vengeance by revenge and chastisement by chastising.

I will only raise this one further question, (6) whether it is likely that the God whom Jesus knew and revealed as the Father in heaven, who in his mercy and generosity concerns himself for both the evil and the good, whether, I say, it is likely that he is administering a sinful world with sole, or even primary, reference to keeping even with men, to rewarding them in strict accordance with their sins, and to preserving the exact balance between their deserts and their sufferings? Grant, of course, that sin deserves punishment. We still ask, with Dr. Dale: Must God treat men in strict accordance with their deserts? "Has he no choice? Is it impossible that he should be merciful? Does he act as a blind, unconscious force?" Is God a retributive mechanism rather than a person, and is his primary quality vengeance rather than mercy? May he not even in "inflicting" the penalties of sin intend to secure, and succeed in securing, the moral betterment of the sinner? As we have seen, there are theologians who are disposed to reply in the negative, and some of them have defined a consistent theory of God's government which excludes this possibility. Far be it from me to set limits to what other men may ascertain, but I hope to be pardoned for doubting (since certainty only properly arises from the possession of knowledge) whether these divines have obtained access to the requisite information which alone could give validity and value to this effort to prove a universal negative.

Let us now outline another mode of conceiving the purpose and effect of the consequences of sin and the motives of God in the government of a sinful world. This view holds that the world is intended to be primarily a training-school, and not a prison, and that, despite the fact of sin, it is not wholly lost to its original intention. In support of this conception considerations like the following are adduced: (1) Assuming that the analogy of human civil punishments furnishes the most available illustration of the nature and object of the appointed consequences of sin, is it not a fact that with the moral evolution of society, disciplinary considerations have acquired an ever enlarging place in the legislative, judicial, and penal treatment of crime? Why has civilized society ceased to regard its punishments as devised and executed with sole reference to inflicting upon the offender an amount of suffering or loss proportionate to his misdeed? Would it be maintained that the modern tendency in penology illustrates a moral decline from the loftier conception of punishment for its own sake, and a retrogression from the divine ideal of primitive

Semitic society: "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"?

(2) But let us bring the subject into personal relations. Suppose the power which punishes is not the impersonal "body politic," but a person who bears a close relation to the offender. Does a wise and just father punish with sole regard to retribution — with no thought, desire, or intention for the betterment of his offending child? Is not the relation of God to mankind best represented by the relation of human parenthood? This was the favorite illustration of Jesus. But it will be noticed that the authors whom we have been reviewing do not so much as mention this conception of God in discussing the question as to his ways, means, and purposes in dealing with sinful man. Dr. Dale, indeed, repudiates the conception of fatherhood as inapplicable.[1] These writers have much to say of God's relation to the eternal law of righteousness, but do not sufficiently consider the question of his relation to mankind. They seem to imagine that their abstractions must be as real to the Almighty as they are to themselves. It is no wonder that the old theology is suspicious of the doctrine of God's fatherhood; its own conclusions are chiefly built up in defiance of it. Those who hold that the concept of fatherhood best represents the relation of God to mankind would say with Lidgett: "The punitive is parental; but the paternal is both deeper and wider than the punitive, just as the punishment of an offending child, severely as it may be inflicted and felt, is a narrower circle resting upon and in the midst of the far wider circle of arrangements which testify to the father's love beyond, around, and therefore in the punishment, so it is with the present penal side of the world."[2]

(3) If the justice and wrath of God are held to be specifically different from love, then it may fairly be

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[1] *Christian Doctrine*, p. 242. Dr. Dale thinks that the analogy of human parenthood breaks down at the critical point — at the point where it bears upon God's procedure in saving men. One cannot wonder, then, that he makes no use of it. But in that case, its uniform and constant employment by our Lord would seem to have been singularly infelicitous.

[2] *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*, p. 258.

claimed that the consequences of sin illustrate solely God's retributive justice. If, as Dr. Simon holds, God ceases to love men just in proportion as he is angry with them on account of their sin, then we must conclude that God's relation to sin and sinners is wholly definable in terms of wrath. But if righteousness is a constitutive element of perfect love; if wrath is a name for the holy energy with which love repudiates and condemns its opposite, then it is no longer possible to conceive of God as dealing with sinful men in mere naked, avenging justice, on the supposition that justice is superior to love and independent of it. The notion of the purely retaliatory aim and effect of punishment rests upon this dualistic separation of attributes in God. We have already seen that it is untenable. It rests upon a psychology which is inapplicable to any personal being; it is logically subversive of the very idea of personal unity. The theory is equally intolerable from an ethical point of view. A father who should deal with the faults of his children in sheer vengeance — with sole regard to proportioning their sufferings to their deserts, and with no thought or concern for their moral betterment, — would be something less than human and would be an object of universal execration. Yet many theologians, by a ready-made definition of "punishment," and by erecting the abstraction "law" into a kind of Nemesis to which God himself is subject, seek to show that in ordaining and enforcing the penalties of sin God is concerned only to weigh out the *quantum* of suffering which each offence deserves. This Deity of the theological books does not seem to me to be the same God as the Father in heaven of whom Jesus spoke. But, happily, he is only the theoretic Divinity of abstract thought, not the God of Christian life and experience.

(4) I would raise the question whether the analogies of human resentment have not been greatly overworked in the interest of the theory that the divine penalties for sins are merely vindicative. No doubt, human anger may so engross a man's thought and feeling as to exclude, for

the time, every emotion except that of vengeance. But is it suitable to attribute to God any such loveless fury, such an absorption in the passion for evening accounts with sinful men as excludes from the divine mind all thought, desire, or effort for their moral improvement? Human punishments, at the best, are fitful, occasional, clumsily proportioned to the offence, and mechanically inflicted. Are we to find in these crudities the type of God's moral government? It is convenient for certain theoretic purposes to do so; but I must question whether this procedure is instructive or even legitimate. Men in punishing deal with isolated acts; God, no doubt, deals with the character, that is, with the man. Yet even humane men are now seeking so to punish as to save, and it is more and more believed to be possible to lead men so to view and to take their punishment as that it should become a fire of purifying to them. If to this it is answered: True enough, but in so far as this is desired, attempted, or secured, their treatment is not "punishment," but "chastisement," we can only reply as before, that we are not concerned about such purely formal distinctions between words. If it is admitted that the consequences which are ordained in the moral order for sin may in any way or degree work beneficial moral effects, then it matters not by what word you decide to name that process and result. If this admission is made, it means that God's treatment of sin and sinners is not merely retaliatory, that is, designed and executed solely to satisfy an appetite for vengeance, but that it is also disciplinary and reformatory. The admission — apart from all questions as to what definitions shall be assigned to certain words — means that human history under God's providential government is not merely a probation, but a training. We have seen that neither Dr. Dale nor Dr. Strong was quite rigorous enough in his logic wholly to exclude this concession. Probably Dr. Shedd did succeed in theoretically excluding the possibility that punishment may ever do any creature of God any good, but does he not also logically define away the very mercy of God and the possibility of salvation for sinners? But it is a comfort to remember that the world is governed neither by "law," nor by theological definitions, but by a personal God.

(5) So long as sin, guilt, and punishment are treated in a kind of quantitative way, it seems plausible enough to balance one against another and to assert that so much sin entails so much guilt and that this much guilt deserves that much suffering. But are not such representations really crude and superficial? It is not sin, but sinners, who are punished. It is not guilt, but persons, who deserve punishment. The mere retributive *quid pro quo* conception of punishment loses its plausibility as soon as we cease dealing with abstractions as if they were entities. This, then, is our question: If we conceive of a personal God as dealing with personal sinful men, can we believe that the consequences which he has ordained for their sins have sole reference to evening accounts with them for their past? Does not the notion of so much pain for so much sin positively travesty the real method of the Father of spirits in dealing with his sinful children, so far as we can form any rational conception of his purpose and procedure? Is it possible that a wise and benevolent God has no concern for the future of sinners, treats them solely with reference to their back debts and with no purpose or plan for their betterment?

All agree, of course, that sin is blameworthy and deserves to be punished. But an increasing number of theologians are of opinion that this fact does not supply the whole philosophy of God's treatment of sinners. "I hold," writes Dr. Moberly, "that we must emphatically claim that punishment, inflicted as discipline, *is punishment.* To rule out from the word 'punishment' all suffering inflicted or accepted, in the name of righteousness, and unto righteousness as an end — to rule out all personal discipline meant for personal holiness — would be to rule out at least the far larger part of all that any of us has, in fact, ever known or meant by punishment."[1] "All punishment," he elsewhere declares, "begins as discipline"; its retributive character is "secondary in reference to its primary purpose, which is a purpose of beneficent love"; "on reflection, we recognize that all our punishment has really the disciplinary motive and meaning; that is, it is really a means, so to change personalities which are now potentially righteous but actually sinful, as to make them, in consummated antithesis against sin, actually righteous."[1] Similarly Dr. Clarke defends a disciplinary and reformatory purpose for punishment. "There is a kind intention in retribution, looking toward the putting away of evils." "In the long run retribution has worked toward moral improvement." "The disciplinary intent in the retributive arrangements of this world is plain."[2] Into the further questions raised by these and other writers, such as: May punishment entirely fail of accomplishing its disciplinary purpose, and if so, would it continue as mere retribution? we need not enter. We have pursued the subject far enough to illustrate the two contrasted theories: (1) Punishment is primarily, or even exclusively, vindicative; (2) it is primarily, if not solely, disciplinary.

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[1] *Atonement and Personality*, p. 11.

From this analysis it is apparent that the penal theory of atonement stands or falls with the vindicatory conception of punishment. The logic of the theory is: Punishment is suffering necessarily inflicted upon sinners in order to satisfy God's justice. If that punishment is not to be inflicted, then his justice must be satisfied by the infliction of some equivalent suffering upon some one who is substituted in the place of sinners. What I would point out is that the argument collapses just in so far as the particular philosophy of punishment in question is modified or weakened. Hence the multitude of quasi-penal views which try to hold that Christ's sufferings and death in some undefined way met the ends of penalty (the satisfaction of the divine wrath against sin), although they were not of the same nature with penalty. From this standpoint two things seem evident to me: (1) that the penal view is a speculative construction derived, in its principles, from an *a priori* theory of God's attributes and moral government, and (2) that the quasi-penal views, such as we have had occasion to notice (see p. 190 *sq.*), attempt the difficult task of sustaining, by main strength, a conclusion whose major premiss has either fallen away or become seriously weakened. It is not strange, therefore, that, at this crucial point in their expositions, the advocates of these theories lapse into the vaguest and most thought-defying generalities, such as that Christ died our death, assumed the responsibility of our sins, suffered *as if* accursed of God, or endured penal *effects;* that his death was an act of homage to the eternal law of righteousness and possessed Godward or objective significance, and the like.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 13, 14, 23, 24.

[2] *Outline of Christian Theology*, p. 254.

But what if God is really dealing with sinful men, and not with the abstractions, sin and guilt and law? And what if the deserved consequences of sin have some part in the plan of eternal love? What if the purpose of Christ's coming and work were to rescue men to sonship to God and to help them to realize their true life in his Kingdom? Then it would appear that Christ poured out his life for men, not to meet the ends of punitive justice, but to save them from the sin which makes justice punitive, delivering them from the terror and despair with which sinners must ever contemplate the righteous Judge, convincing them that forgiving love is mightier than the justice before which they tremble. In this view Christ did not exhaust the consequences of sin in himself in order that there might be none left over for us, but came to break the power of evil and to establish the power of goodness in human life, so that the flow of penal consequences might, in the nature of the case, be arrested.

CHAPTER V

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

The subject which is covered by this title has been prevailingly treated in theology under the Pauline category of justification. This fact is due, in general, to the predominant influence of Paul upon theological conceptions and terminology, and, more especially, to the circumstance that justification, being a forensic term, accords well with the legal analogies under which the whole doctrine of salvation has been construed in traditional dogmatics. We shall, in due time, seek to determine the content and legitimate use of the Pauline idea of justification; meantime, let us consider the corresponding term which is characteristic of the teaching of Jesus and of the earliest apostolic preaching, — the forgiveness of sins.

We may begin by recalling the form which the doctrine of remission received in the older Protestant theology. In outline it was as follows: For every sin God has ordained a definite *quantum* of penal suffering. This suffering his retributive righteousness obliges him to inflict. Being disposed, however, by his grace to make possible the exemption of (some) men from these penalties, he imputes the sins of those whom he would save to his Son, who vicariously endures the punishment which they deserve. By this voluntary endurance of penal sufferings in deference to retributive justice, the Saviour has acquired a treasury of merits which are, in turn, upon their acceptance of the same, imputed to those in whose place he died. Thus the prescribed penalties of sin are remitted, *de jure* through their being inflicted upon another, and *de facto* through the consent and confidence of sinful men in this twofold imputation. Forgiveness is thus an acquittal, an amnesty, a suspension of penalty; it is a verdict of "not guilty" before the law, a letting-go, a declaration that the believer is "righteous," that is, to be now regarded and treated as righteous; this is justification.

For this interpretation of our subject appeal is confidently made to the biblical use of the terms in question. "Justification" is certainly in Paul an *actus forensis*, a decree of exemption from penalty and of acceptance into God's favor. As for "forgiveness," it is in the Old Testament a "covering over" of sin, a hiding of it from God's face, while in the New it is a remission, a releasing, or letting-go (ἄφεσις). How perfectly do these terms accord with the analogy of the law court! How aptly do they describe the formality of a verdict which dismisses the accusation and proclaims the accused blameless before the law! Moreover, how harmoniously does this conception blend with those of penal substitution and imputation — ideas whose biblical warrant and authoritative character are established, for the theology under consideration, beyond the remotest possibility of doubt.

If, now, we inquire, what is the relation of this verdict of exemption to real salvation, — how does it stand connected with the life of Godlike love which, according to Christ, *is* salvation, it will be apparent that it can hardly be more than a preliminary, or condition precedent. This is admitted and even maintained as the chief commendation of the doctrine in question by the older theology. Justification is one thing; sanctification is quite another. One has to do with putative righteousness; the other has to do with real righteousness. Considered simply as such, the justified sinner is no more righteous after than before justification. He is *declared* righteous, that is, he is technically and legally so, — righteous so far as any verdict of condemnation is concerned, — exempt from accusation and penalty. Now the way is clear for him to begin the Christian life. Having received the divine pardon, the sinner may then begin to recover the divine image. "That the remission of sins, if it stood alone," says Dr. Dale, "would leave us unsaved, is one of the common-places of Christian theology."[1] In the type of theology of which Dr. Dale is speaking, and of which he approves, forgiveness is a preliminary of salvation rather than a part of it.

The estimate which I would form of this course of thought may be inferred, in general, from previous references to the scheme of which it is a part. Certainly no judicious theologian would deny that it covers important truths and has served a useful purpose. I should make no objection to it, if it were always regarded as an analogical or figurative representation, — an anthropomorphic picture of moral and spiritual realities and processes, true suggestively and illustratively, but, when taken as a scientific formula, inadequate and misleading. One may say of this Jewish legalist scheme (for such it is) what the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says of Judaism in general, that it furnishes useful types and pictures of the heavenly realities which must not, however, be confounded with these realities themselves. We probably have just here the best illustration of Professor Jowett's remark that theology is more largely under the influence of figures of speech than any other branch of thought or knowledge. There are really two figures which have dominated the orthodox doctrine of forgiveness, — that of the discharge of a debt by vicarious payment and that of the acquittal of a culprit. The one is a commercial, the other a legal figure. The former is germane to the Anselmic doctrine of atonement, the latter, to the post-Reformation doctrine. One can appeal to the commercial word "ransom" in the teaching of Jesus; the other, even more plausibly, to the judicial word "justify" in Paul. These figures are commonly used interchangeably, and properly so, as long as their use is merely illustrative; but, as we have seen, when taken as prescribing the form of a theory, they are quite different and carry very different implications. Any person who has the means and the disposition can pay another's debt and so procure his discharge from obligation to pay it; but it is a very different thing, and one by no means so obviously true, to say that one person may experience another's punishment. It is further clear that if our debts have been paid once by another it would be unjust to require that they be paid a second time; since that prepayment, then, we cannot have been obligated by them. It is evident as soon as one begins thus to press this commercial analogy, that it is entirely inadequate to serve as a scientific thought-form for the moral and spiritual realities involved in forgiveness. The same holds true of the legal analogy. The judge who "justifies" the accused, that is, dismisses his case as not proved, — has no concern with his character, stands in no special relation to him outside the terms of the particular charge made, and passes no verdict on his real moral condition. How evident it is that the analogies which are drawn from such commercial and legal relations and processes as these are too remote from morality and too artificial and anthropomorphic to serve as precise or adequate descriptions of the method of the fatherly love of God in dealing with sinful men.

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[1] *The Atonement*, p. 336.

Our first constructive task is to see if we can determine the Christian idea of forgiveness. To this end a mere inspection of the words rendered "forgive" would not greatly aid us; they are themselves figurative terms, and their import must be derived from the general teaching in which they are imbedded. Our Lord seems to have spoken of God's forgiveness of men rather incidentally and by allusion. He uses a certain idea of the divine forgiveness as a test and measure of human forgiveness. To forgive as God forgives is one of the conditions of sonship to God, that is, of participation in the Kingdom of the Godlike. Hence Jesus teaches that men must love their enemies and be ready to forgive and bless them. This readiness to forgive, this granting of forgiveness, as it were in advance, is one of the conditions of obtaining the divine remission of sins. "Forgive us our debts," we are taught to pray, "as we also *have forgiven* (ἀφήκαμεν) our debtors" (Mt. vi. 12). "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Mt. vi. 14, 15). The parable of the Great Debtor (Mt. xviii. 21–35) is designed to teach the duty of a full and free human forgiveness by reference to the example of the divine forgiveness. Not "until seven times" only, but "until seventy times seven"; that is, freely, largely, liberally, must we forgive the penitent offender. Why? Because it is so that God forgives, and because we cannot be forgiven by him unless we possess this forgiving spirit. But these two reasons blend into one. God can receive to his favor only those who aspire and strive to be like himself. The cruel and revengeful are not forgivable; only the merciful obtain mercy at his hands.

But the most striking picture of the divine forgiveness is contained in the parable of the Lost Son. The eager waiting of the father for the first sign of penitence, the anticipation of the son's return by the paternal compassion, the rapturous welcome, the merriment and feasting—these are the outlines of the picture of the forgiving love of God. Now the question arises: What idea as to the nature of forgiveness most naturally emerges from these various comparisons and illustrations? It is plain, in the first place, that God forgives as a Father. Jesus speaks almost uniformly of forgiveness in connection with his teaching about God's fatherhood and man's true sonship to him. It is a question on what terms and conditions "your Father" can forgive you. It is a question about men's being like their Father in forgiving love. And when Jesus wishes to illustrate at once the nature of sin and of recovery from it, he pictures an unfilial life from which the wandering son is restored by paternal love to his normal relations in the home of his father.

It appears, then, alike from the descriptions of human forgiveness and from the allusions to its divine model, that forgiveness is a restoration of personal relations, a reconstitution of impaired or sundered ties. Among men it is a becoming reconciled to one's brother man — or, at least, a prominent factor in effecting such a reconciliation.

Similarly, in God, it is the reception of sinful man into his favor and fellowship. It is the Father's welcome of a disobedient, but now repentant son; the admission of him to his normal place in the home, an admission as complete as if he had never wandered away. In such ways did Jesus describe God's forgiveness. It is viewed as a paternal act, taking its character and significance from the fatherly relation of God to man. Jesus made no use of legal analogies to illustrate its nature; the conception of debt and its remission which he employed, alternates with such terms as trespasses and sins, and is obviously figurative. Of the official and almost impersonal relations of the law court and of the abstraction called the divine law or government, he made no use. So far as we can judge, these conceptions had no place in his thoughts. Is it desirable that we should supplement his mode of representing the subject by terms of a more legal and official cast? The traditional theology has done even more than this: it has supplanted Jesus' intensely personal descriptions of forgiveness with an apparatus of judicial processes, — balances, equivalences, imputations, and fiats, — and often has not hesitated to disparage the favorite analogy of Jesus for describing the subject as inadequate and defective at the most crucial point. To my mind, however, while other analogies, such as the relations involved in a suit at law, or in a financial transaction, may be especially useful for illustrating particular aspects of the subject, they should be held subordinate to our Lord's mode of viewing and describing forgiveness. Nor do I believe that, rightly estimated, the New Testament yields any conception of the matter which differs essentially from his distinctly ethical and personal view of it. At any rate, the conception of forgiveness as the restoration between spirits essentially kindred, of normal personal relations, is the specifically Christian view.

But the greatest deficiency which theology has found in the teaching of Jesus about forgiveness is that he does not recognize the existence of any obstacle to forgiveness in God which requires to be removed by a propitiation before he can exercise forgiving grace. It is this fact, as we have seen, which has led some theologians to deny that there is any gospel in the teaching of Jesus, and to see in it only a kind of prelude to the ampler truth of subsequent reflection. Our Lord is very explicit, however, in stating that there are conditions of forgiveness on man's side. The offender must sincerely repent, that is, he must realize and acknowledge his fault, must condemn and repudiate it. This he obviously could not do unless he saw and preferred the right, the good, and the true with which his evil acts and choices stand in contrast. He must in some real way break with the evil of which he would be forgiven, and in aspiration and preference identify himself with the good. If he would have God receive him, he must come to God ; if he would live his true life as a son of God, he must forsake the far country of sin and return to his home and his Father. And one who thus dares to hope in God's mercy toward his own offences will, as a matter of course, be charitable toward those who have offended against himself. If in reconciliation with God we must come over to his side — make his character our goal and standard — then, of course, we must be merciful as he is merciful ; to be unforgiving would be to deny the very meaning of the forgiveness which we desire for ourselves, because we can be forgiven only when we choose and aspire to be Godlike. Such are the conditions of forgiveness in the teaching of Jesus, and besides them he recognizes no other.

This same conception of forgiveness, according to the Book of Acts, underlay the earliest apostolic preaching. The principal references to the subject are as follows : Peter calls upon his fellow-Jews to repent and be baptized to the end of receiving the remission of sins (Acts ii. 38). Again he declares that God has exalted Christ to his right hand to bestow repentance and remission of sins (Acts v. 31). He counsels Simon Magus to repent of the wicked thought of his heart if perhaps it may be forgiven him (Acts viii. 22). Paul declares that through the man Jesus is proclaimed to the Jews remission of sins and a justification unattainable by the law (Acts xiii. 38, 39), and that he has been commissioned to go to the Gentiles bearing the gospel of repentance and remission (Acts xxvi. 18, 20). Unless we supplement these references liberally from other sources, we can find here only the idea of a free forgiveness, available through Christ, an echo of his word that he had come to seek and to save the lost.

For Paul "justification" and "forgiveness" are synonymous terms. He illustrates the reckoning of the believer's faith to him for righteousness by quoting the Psalmist's words: "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered" (Rom. iv. 7). Only in the later epistles, however, in which the Jewish category of justification no longer appears, do we find a direct use made of the term "forgiveness." Here the apostle teaches that God has graciously blessed us (*ἐχαρίσατο*; Eng. vss. "hath forgiven," "forgave") in, or through, Christ (*ἐν Χριστῷ*),[1] and declares that through his blood we have our redemption, that is, the forgiveness of our sins (Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14); that from the spiritual death of sin believers have been quickened into new life with Christ, receiving the forgiveness of all their trespasses (Col. ii. 13). It will be noticed that the idea of forgiveness here stands in the closest connection with those thoughts which the apostle is fond of expressing by the phrase "in Christ." *In Christ* God has forgiven us, that is, in union with him, in the fellowship of his life; we have received our forgiveness in and with the bestowment of a new life in Christ. This conception of dying to sin and rising to newness of life with Christ is quite as characteristic of Paul's thought as the idea of justification, and far more pervading in his writings.[2] In his polemic against a Judaizing theology he naturally uses, by preference, the terms whose import and explanation were in dispute, but in the more positive and independent development of his own conception of salvation he chiefly employs biological, rather than legal, analogies. Here salvation is conceived as a vital process, rather than as a formal acquittal or decree of exemption from penalty. We shall pursue this matter further when we come to consider the Pauline idea of salvation by union with Christ.

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[1] Eph. iv. 32; *cf.* Col. iii. 13.

[2] *Cf.* my *Theology of the New Testament*, pp. 423–430.

From this *résumé* of the New Testament references to the subject I am led to conclude that the two most characteristic notes in the Christian doctrine of forgiveness are these: (1) it is a paternal act — the restoration of one who is by right a son, to normal relations with his heavenly Father; and (2) it is an experience which is involved in our entrance into life-fellowship with Christ and the realization of a new hope and a new life in him. How far is forgiveness, then, from having the character of a mere court-verdict, a pronouncement or decree! As well conceive that a human father's recovery and restoration of an unfilial son to his right relations with himself were some such legal formality. It is rather a triumph of love, a victory of influence, an achievement in the world of personal relations.

The first of these two ideas just mentioned is the keynote of our Lord's teaching on the subject; the second is the keynote of Paul's thought. They are perfectly accordant, belonging, as they both do, to the sphere of moral realities and relations. The latter is but a production or elaboration of the former. Since Christ has shown us the way to the Father, it is in fellowship with him that we come to God. Since he alone has realized the life of perfect sonship to God, it is through him alone that we can recover our own impaired sonship. The two ideas meet in the truth of Christ's mediation. He reveals at once the Father whose forgiveness we need, and assures us of his readiness to receive us, and, also, quickens in us the sense of sin and the impulse to repentance. He gives repentance that he may procure us remission. In fellowship with him we see our unlikeness to God, yet he enables us to hope in a possible likeness to him. Yes, forgiveness is an act of fatherly compassion, and it is in the company of Christ that we come to its secure realization.

The indispensable condition of forgiveness which is recognized in Scripture and by the moral judgment of mankind, is penitence. "If he repent, forgive him" is the law alike for human and for the divine forgiveness. "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 Jn. i. 9). The author does not shrink from implying that God would be unjust if he did not forgive on condition of true repentance. He would be unrighteous if he were implacable. Jesus laid upon the conscience of mankind the duty of forgiveness, upon repentance, as absolute and imperative. Why? Because it is Godlike so to forgive. He grounded this duty where he grounded all duty — in the obligation to be like God — in the requirement that men should live and act as the sons of God. The disposition to forgive is a part of moral perfection. The conception that God ever was or could be unwilling to forgive is a contradiction to the biblical idea of God. There not only is, but ever has been, and ever must be, forgiveness with him. He evinces his righteousness, his equity, his perfection, in forgiving upon condition of sincere penitence. He would be less just than men are required to be if it were otherwise. This apostolic note is but an echo of the teaching of the prophets: God's righteousness includes his grace; for his name's sake, that is, because of what he is, he is merciful and gracious; he is "a righteous God and a Saviour."

But what is the relation between penitence and forgiveness? What is repentance that it should warrant, and even require, forgiveness? Might some other condition as well have been prescribed? We must answer that penitence is a sincere regret and sorrow for sin because of what sin is seen and felt to be. It is a moral revulsion from the evil of sin. Its more positive aspect is a preference and yearning for the good, that is, for the Godlike. In the language of human relations, which Jesus did not hesitate to use in illustration, penitence is the sense of defeat and failure in the life of disobedience and selfish isolation; it is the misery and wretchedness of self-banishment from the father's house. And this feeling is sharpened by the thought of the paternal love and bounty and by the vision of home with its open door and waiting welcome. At length penitence ripens into the resolution and act of returning home. Can there be any question why repentance is necessary to forgiveness? That were like asking why the disobedient son needs to go home — why it is necessary for him to change his former attitude and action toward his father's love and bounty. Disobedience and ingratitude have sundered the true relations of the home; a sense of the wrong and folly of his action and of the rightfulness of the filial, obedient life is absolutely essential to reconciliation, to forgiveness and harmony.

Repentance has, then, these two principal elements, which show its relation to forgiveness: (1) it is a sight and realization of the evil of sin; and (2) it is, in some measure at least, a hungering and thirsting after righteousness — an act of homage to the good and the true, however dimly seen — a dawning conviction and preference in favor of a holy, Godlike life. These two elements of penitence are not at all separable; neither can exist without the other. They are the negative and positive sides of the same truth — two aspects of the same experience.

It is the peculiarity of sin that it never dares to be itself — to stand forth frankly in its true character. The sinner always seeks to persuade himself that his sin is some sort of goodness, or is at least justifiable and therefore not, on the whole, bad in the circumstances. Evil always tries to cloak itself in a semblance of goodness. Satan transforms himself into an angel of light. No advocate ever stood up to defend the evil *as such*. He can only defend the criminal on the supposition that his act was in some degree justified or excused by extenuating circumstances. There can be no eloquence on behalf of sin *as sin*. Hence selfishness always calls itself legitimate self-interest, cruelty names itself firmness, arrogance seems to itself to be but self-respect. It is due to this tendency of sin to disguise itself that the most subtle sins of temper and motive have so commonly masqueraded in the guise of piety. "Hypocrisy is the homage which vice pays to virtue." Now, true penitence brings to an end this conscious or unconscious deception. Penitence is the vision of sin as it is; it is the soul's moral verdict in repudiation of it; it is a determination to break with the evils which impair character and conduct and to identify one's self with the good which he now sees that he has failed to realize. How far removed is this deep ethical experience of the soul from anything that can be more than remotely illustrated by court-processes or book-keeping analogies!

But we are told that all human penitence is imperfect — that it involves but an inadequate sense of sin and a very partial appreciation of righteousness. Our very sinfulness, it is said, prevents us from being adequately penitent. Dr. Moberly has laid great stress upon this thought[1] and has deduced from it the idea that another, who is sinless, must be perfectly penitent for us in order that our sin may be adequately acknowledged. Of course it is true that all human penitence is imperfect in the sense that men never adequately realize the evil of sin and the worth of goodness. But is it not the very nature of the *grace* of God to accept us in our imperfect desires and intentions — not because of what they are in themselves, but for what they promise and are capable of becoming? Is this not, indeed, the very meaning of the divine grace? The suggestion of Dr. Moberly seems to me to look toward a kind of quantitative conception of penitence, as if salvation were a sort of *quid pro quo* affair. His idea that only a sinless person can be adequately penitent, strikes me as paradoxical in the extreme. Is penitence regret and remorse for others' sins or for one's own? I have always supposed the latter to be the case. It has been commonly thought that it was because we are sinners that we need to become penitents. The definitions in question view penitence too abstractly and impersonally. It is true that penitence means a realization of sin and an appreciation of goodness, but it means these on the part of sinners and in their own experience of sin and of moral aspiration and effort.

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[1] *Atonement and Personality*, ch. ii.

If, then, repentance has the character which we have assigned to it, it is obvious that he who makes us see and feel our sins and, at the same time, reveals and realizes before our eyes the Godlike life, does something for our salvation whose practical value and power are beyond all doubt or dispute. Men may find the conception that he pays our back debts quite irrelevant ; they may pronounce the idea that he confesses or repents of our sins for us unintelligible ; they may regard the notion that he endures our punishment and so exempts us from it as immoral and absurd ; but if it can be shown that in him is manifested a goodness of God which leads men to repentance ; if it can be seen that he quickens in men those desires and aspirations after Godlikeness which make them hate their sins, and if it is plain that he does actually and effectually open the Kingdom of heaven to the believer, then here is a power of God unto salvation which none can gainsay. To all the schemes to which we have just referred, the strongest moral objections have been more and more keenly felt. It has been, not infrequently, acknowledged by advocates of the penal view that it must be accepted on sheer authority. It is a biblical idea, argue Drs. Smeaton and Crawford, and it is of small consequence whether we can justify it to reason or not. It is imposed upon all Christian minds, contends Dr. Hodge, by unquestionable biblical authority ; hence none but unbelievers have ever doubted its truth.[1] The fact remains, however, that within the Church itself, all legal and commercial interpretations of what Christ does for our salvation have been more and more discredited and abandoned.[2]

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[1] *Cf.* p. 184.

[2] In the symposium on the atonement published by the London *Christian World* in 1899–1900, and participated in by representative divines of various nationalities, I find that, of the seventeen articles, ten illustrate the moral view and four a governmental or quasi-penal interpretation. The other three I am unable to classify. In his *Moral Evolution* Presi-

We can scarcely suppose that the representatives of the forensic theology fully realized the desperateness of their case when they admitted the alternative: You may either follow your moral reason in the interpretation of the saving work of Christ, or you may submit to and receive the teaching of the Bible; the choice lies between them. For all doubtful or perplexed minds — for all who can see no way to subjugate their moral judgments to what is called "bare authority" (as if in the field of morals or religion there could be any such thing) — this means: Choose between a certain, more or less official, *interpretation* of the biblical language about atonement and what seem to you to be the axioms of ethics and equity. In the presence of such an alternative the issue could hardly be doubtful — and it has been what might have been expected. But, really, it was the authority of an interpretation which was contended for. The question is: What is biblical? and this question was quite too easily solved. The history of this controversy seems to me to have made two things absolutely evident: (1) that the biblical doctrine of salvation cannot be legitimately deduced from a few figurative and illustrative words and phrases; and (2) that nothing could be more perilous or do a more doubtful honor to the Bible, than to propose a choice between its authority and the moral reason of man. I conclude that a view of Christ's work — partial and incomplete though it may be — which men can grasp and construe in terms of moral reality; a view which correlates that work to the actual moral experience of man in his aspirations and struggles; a view which brings the saving mercy of God down into our human life and discovers to us One at our side who actually proves himself to be the way to the Father — such a view alone can appeal to and satisfy "the modern mind." It is vain to flourish the weapons of authority.

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dent George Harris, speaking of Bushnell's *Vicarious Sacrifice*, says: "He denied all theories of a substitutionary bearing of penalty or its equivalent. A heated controversy followed. But now his views are more generally accepted than any other views of the sacrifice of Christ" (p. 408).

The men of our time understand too well that the authority with which they are threatened is but the authority of one mode of viewing the problem. They assert for themselves the right to judge and estimate the various references of Scripture to the subject — which is really what all interpretations have always done. They insist that, in the deepest and truest sense, that is biblical which accords with the fundamental Christian concepts of God and man, and they refuse to acknowledge the binding force of far-fetched inferences from illustrative figures of speech or the prescriptive authority of a dogmatic tradition which arose and developed in a world of ideas — such as those of feudalism and Germanic law — which, for the modern man, has been radically modified or has even passed out of existence altogether.

From this seeming digression I return to the thought, that one of the greatest and most obvious saving deeds of Christ for us is that he gives repentance and so remission. He makes us feel and know our sin and shows us the sure way of escape from it. I should like to present this thought in the well-chosen words of another: "Christ's forgiveness begins by revealing our sin. Or, it begins by revealing God's justice, and by uttering in our consciences his condemnation of sin. Christ makes this revelation in many ways. He makes it by his personal character — by his very presence in the world. The sinless One leaves us 'no cloak for our sin.' Christ, and Christ alone, is able to give this revelation of evil. But further, the whole development of Christ's history is a further revelation of evil. Good as such, and sin as such, are there seen in conflict. And the whole evil of our sin is made plain to us when we perceive that we are sinning against love. The cross is the supreme manifestation of sin. There we see sin, not only in outward acts, but in Christ's exceeding sickness and sorrow under the burden of the world's wickedness. At the cross of Christ believers have always learned how evil sin is. Whether or not their doctrinal explanations of their own experience have been correct, the experience itself has been God-given, spiritual, saving.

Christ has convinced them of sin. Christ condemns not his immediate persecutors, but the whole world. He reveals our malady as not weakness or accident but guilt."[1]

The question remains: What, precisely, does forgiveness, by itself considered, accomplish? How far does it undo or neutralize our sin and its effects? I do not believe that any general, abstract answer, which will be equally applicable to all cases, can be given to this question. It depends largely upon the nature of a given sin, or course of sinful action, how far forgiveness — the divine forgiveness even — can cancel its effects. If, for example, in human relations, one man envies or hates another, a genuine reconciliation between them, including forgiveness, would cancel the ill-will and heal the alienation. If, on the other hand, in a fit of rage one man has permanently injured or killed another, or by a course of physical indulgence has undermined his own health or plunged his family into misery and disgrace, here are consequences which persist though the man in question were to become a saint.

Forgiveness cannot undo the fact that the sin has been committed. It cannot efface the memory of the fact. It does not obliterate regret and remorse on account of the fact. Nor can forgiveness wipe out at once all the moral consequences of sinful action. Sin works a moral deterioration from which men do not recover in a moment, though they may suddenly enter on the way to recovery from it. There are sins which leave scars in the moral life which with greatest difficulty, and often never, are effaced. The natural flow of evils, physical and social, which follow certain forms of sin, is not arrested, completely and all at once, even by God's forgiveness.

But we are speaking here of forgiveness "by itself considered." It should be added, however, that, in fact, forgiveness never stands thus wholly isolated; certainly the divine forgiveness never operates wholly "by itself."

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[1] Professor Robert Mackintosh, *Essays towards a New Theology*, pp. 48, 49.

Forgiveness is but one factor in salvation. Along with the act of reconciliation which we call forgiveness, coöperate personal influences and agencies. The pardon of sin is never conceived in Scripture in separation from the cleansing, life-bestowing action of the divine Spirit. Were it otherwise, the doctrine of remission would bear a very formal and negative character. But not even for Paul is justification or forgiveness a mere non-imputation of sin ; it is a reckoning of faith for righteousness, and faith means union of life with Christ and carries us into that world of vital and transforming personal influences which the apostle associates with the phrase "in Christ." Forgiveness, then, as a name for the beginning or restoration of right personal relations, denotes the first step, on the divine side, in the development of the saved life. As such it signifies the cessation of God's disfavor and condemnation on account of past sin and his gracious reception of the sinner into his friendship. It alters man's relation to his sinful past since he now knows that having broken with that past, his future life is not to be determined by it, and he is enabled to believe that God now regards and treats him not according to what he has been, or even according to what he is to-day, but according to what he would like to be. Forgiveness is the revelation and the first realization of grace, and in that grace — that undeserved favor of God — that eagerness of God to recover and bless men — lie all the powers and possibilities of salvation. "Forgiveness is not complete salvation, but opens the way to it. It gives a man a clean record with God, so far as condemnation is concerned, and the opportunity of a new start in life under God's own influence. It is the transition from a guilty past to a holy future."[1]

[1] Clarke, *Outline of Christian Theology*, pp. 257, 258.

CHAPTER VI

THE RELATION OF CHRIST TO MANKIND

We have next to consider a question which has been more or less agitated throughout the whole history of theology : Did the purpose of Christ's mission have sole reference to the salvation of men from sin? Or, to put it in more general terms : Was his work a part of the divine plan of the world? Is there reason for believing that there would have been an incarnation of God such as we behold in the life and work of Christ, even if man had never sinned?

The question may seem, at first sight, an idle one. Why speculate, it may be asked, about what might, or probably would have been, if the moral history of the world had been utterly different from what it has been? It is not strange that to many the question has seemed useless, if not positively presumptuous. Moreover, is it not answered and settled for us by explicit scriptural teaching? Did not Christ define the purpose of his coming as the seeking and saving of the lost? Does not Paul clearly teach that the object of our Lord's appearance was that men might be redeemed from the curse pronounced by the law upon sin, and receive the adoption of sons (Gal. iv. 4), and does not John say explicitly that God sent his Son that men might not perish in sin, but obtain eternal life (Jn. iii. 16)? For the reasons here suggested the common view has been that the incarnation was conditioned solely upon the fact of human sin. "Scripture," says Dr. Denney, "dwells on the fact that Christ came into the world to save sinners, and never gives the faintest hint of any opening" in favor of the view that the incarnation was "included in the original design of the world" — that "creation is built on redemptive lines."[1]

On the other hand, not a few theologians in the earlier ages of the Church, and a large number of modern scholars, are of opinion that there are both biblical and speculative considerations which strongly favor the view that the work of Christ is a part of the divine plan of the world and has therefore a meaning and purpose which are not exhausted in the rescue of man from evil — that, in short, we may well believe that Christ would have come even if man had never sinned at all.[2] This theory does not call in question the truth, but only maintains the inadequacy, of the common view. It contends, not for a contrary, but for a wider, conception of the incarnation. "It is not possible on reflection," writes Bishop Westcott, "to exclude all other conceptions from the incarnation except those of satisfaction and atonement. We must look to the perfection and not only to the redemption of man. We cannot conceive that a being capable of knowing God and of being united with him should not have been destined to gain that knowledge, to realize that union. We cannot suppose that the consummation of man and of humanity and the realization of Christ's Kingdom, which have been brought about by the incarnation, are dependent on the fall; we cannot suppose that they could have been brought about in any other way than in that according to which they are now revealed to us in their supreme glory."[3]

On the question whether any of the New Testament writers adopted, or even approximated, any such conception as this, we have seen that the most opposite judgments are pronounced. That there should have been any explicit treatment of such a problem in the primitive Church was, of course, not to be expected. The question is, whether the more speculative thinkers of the first age, men like Paul and John, developed their thoughts in the direction of such a view or theory. It appears to me that Paul's teaching concerning the cosmic significance of Christ moves distinctly in this direction. He sees in Christ God's coefficient in the creation and administration of the world; through him and for him all things have been created; his work seems to be regarded as the realization of God's eternal world-plan (Col. i. 15–18; Eph. iii. 9–11). Now whether these thoughts be taken in a strictly realistic sense or be regarded as presenting an ideal picture of the historic Redeemer, — in either case Christ's work is correlated with God's eternal purpose for the world, and not merely with the fact of sin. The passages are certainly adapted to suggest the conception that Christ's saving mission was the completion of the ideal world-order, whose most obvious and immediate aim, indeed, was the rescue of mankind from evil, but whose whole meaning and purpose are not exhausted in that aspect of it. If sin is incidental to humanity, if it does not belong to man as such, how can it be regarded as furnishing the whole occasion of God's supreme revelation of himself?

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[1] *Studies in Theology*, pp. 100, 101. For the opposite opinion that "certain passages of Scripture do necessarily suggest a wider view," see Orr's *The Christian View of God and the World*, pp. 319–322.

[2] For the history of this view down to the Reformation era see Westcott's essay on *The Gospel of Creation* in his commentary on the Epistles of St. John. Among modern representatives of the theory in question may be mentioned Bishops Lightfoot, Westcott, and Martensen, and Drs. Dorner, Rothe, Van Oosterzee, and Orr.

[3] *Op. cit.*, pp. 324, 325.

It may, indeed, be held, as Dr. Orr says the "ultra-Calvinist" would hold, that sin itself is positively included in God's eternal purpose, that its existence in the world is not merely foreseen or permitted, but foreordained. In that case, sin is doubtless as real a part of the world-plan as Christ is, and may still be regarded as expressing the whole occasion of his historic mission. But the difficulties of this view are not inconsiderable. They are such as these: Why, then, is not God himself responsible for the existence of sin, and how should man be to blame for it? and, Is not sin, in that case, an element in the make of the world, a metaphysical imperfection implanted in the very constitution of humanity? Whatever inferences on this point the principles of Calvin may require, it seems to me quite evident that the Christian view of God and the world does not include the opinion that sin was a part of the original divine plan of the system. This conception, then, is hardly available as a means of refuting the view in question of Christ's revealing and perfecting work.

Again : the Fourth Gospel sees in Christ the Logos, the creative reason of God, the eternal principle of the world-order. Apart from this creative Word nothing was made that has been made (Jn. i. 3). From the beginning of the world the light of life which was in the Logos has been shining down into the darkness of the world's ignorance and sin, illumining the mind of each individual man (Jn. i. 9). This writer, therefore, sees a work of Christ implicit in creation itself — a revealing and saving work which is conterminous with the history of the race. Here, too, the point under consideration is independent of the judgment which one may form respecting the source of these ideas or the nature of the preëxistence which is predicated of Christ. The passages cannot mean less than that Christ and his work were embraced in the ideal world-order ; they do certainly illustrate the effort of Christian speculation to correlate Christ with creation itself and to define a meaning in his work which shall make it as comprehensive as the needs and possibilities of mankind.

Quite in accordance with these ideas we find that the Johannine writings define the purpose of Christ's coming in a broader way than does the theory which holds that the one occasion of it is the rescue of man from sin. He is the light of the world ; he comes to shine upon the minds of men, to reveal God to them, to bear witness to the truth concerning his nature and requirements. These writings speak quite as much of revelation as of redemption through Christ. Now, can we suppose that, even apart from sin, there would have been no occasion for the rising of this heavenly light upon our world ; that mankind would not have needed to receive of his fulness ; that his interpretation of God to man in terms of human life would not have been needful? We are, indeed, quite powerless to state what might have been in other conditions, but I think we can say with considerable confidence, that the supposition that the work of Christ was conditioned solely upon sin and unnecessary apart from it, fails to rise to the point of view of Paul and John. To me it seems inadequate to the demands of any form of speculation which sees in Christ something more than a repairer or restorer and regards him as the realization of the divine ideal of humanity.

These considerations serve to bring before us the immediate subject of the present chapter: The Relation of Christ to Mankind. I assume that in making any effort to deal with it we must keep on the ground of historic fact. It will hardly be found useful to make any attempt to accompany those theologians who mount at once into the upper air and bring back such announcements as that Christ is the root or the sum of humanity or the principle of mental interaction or logical induction. For my part I find it more interesting to pursue the inquiry: How did Jesus himself conceive his relation to our humanity and what impression concerning that relation did he make upon those among whom he lived on earth? If we could even partially answer these questions, the result might throw some light upon the saving mission of Christ. What I shall attempt, then, will be to draw from the Gospel portrait of Jesus a few general inferences which will serve to show how he truly is the Saviour of mankind.

We must, first of all, recur to a point already noted in another connection, namely, that Christ cherished for the human race a feeling so singularly fraternal that it has won for him the peerless title of the Brother of his fellow-men. He subsumed the narrower relations of kinship into those of universal brotherhood. Looking upon a multitude who sat about him he could say: "Behold my mother and my brethren." Nor did he merely *say* this! He lived and acted precisely as if every person was unspeakably dear to him; the lowliest and humblest could not have been more precious in his sight, if they had been his closest kindred and companions. He so identified himself with men as to make their interest his interest. He was the perfect Lover of mankind.

He accordingly sought the well-being of all men. He despised none, despaired of none.[1] He found something good even in moral outcasts and was often able to fan this spark of goodness into flame. He draws from the tax-gatherer Zacchæus a great confession whereby he proves himself a true son of Abraham. He wins the confidence of the Roman centurion in whose nobility and generosity he can see a faith not matched in all Israel. His purity quickens in the robber at his side on the cross a vague yearning to share in the Kingdom of righteousness and he is promised the fellowship of Christ in Paradise. He was the friend of publicans and sinners, not from any personal preference or class-feeling, but because his love and sympathy flowed most freely where men were neediest. He was equally ready and anxious to be a friend of Scribes and Pharisees if only they would have him for a friend. He estimated men not for what they were at the moment but for what they were desirous and capable of becoming. Aspiration, not present achievement, was for him the chief test of character. Not those who count themselves already righteous and believe that they need no repentance, but those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall receive the blessing which he promises. He who receives into his favor and friendship a righteous man because he *is* righteous shall have the reward of the goodness which he admires. Such is Jesus' generous estimate of men. Not what they are, but what they would like to be — that is the truest test and measure of them. Hence he could gain no point of contact with the self-righteous. He found none so helpless and hopeless as those who were satisfied to remain as they were. But his love and sympathy were not on that account less inclusive. Jesus was the Friend of man.

His interest in men related to the moral life. He concerned himself with God's Kingdom and righteousness.

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[1] *Cf.* Lk. vi. 35, R. V. marg.: "despairing of no man."

He was the supreme Prophet of the soul. True, he never displayed an ascetic contempt for the world and the natural life of man. He mingled with his fellows at their feasts, in their work, and in their sorrows. He was no austere despiser of life's joys. Unlike his predecessor, John, he "came eating and drinking," and by his whole career he sanctioned a wholesome, active, normal life. He was in no sense an eccentric or lawless person. Nevertheless, the whole emphasis of his thought and work was on the inner life. He saw that the meaning and value of life hinge upon motives and principles which rule within and that the world is therefore what we make it. The Kingdom of God comes in the world in proportion as it comes in the hearts of men. Out of the aims and purposes which rule the inner life spring the good or the evil which build or wreck human happiness and hope. The pure in heart see God, for the pure heart is the eye. Such were some of the ways in which Jesus brought out the primacy of the moral life. To this truth he was absolutely committed. He staked everything upon it. In the power of it he consecrated himself to his work. To assert it and make it prevail in the minds and hearts of men he taught and labored and died.

Jesus believed implicitly in the triumph of meekness, gentleness, and love. He knew that the greatest powers on earth were not swords and armies. Despite the long history of human strife and bloodshed, despite the sad story of man's inhumanity to man, Jesus knew that there was a power in suffering love which could conquer even human malignity and that the forces of evil must at last break themselves upon his divine patience. "The meek shall inherit the earth," he dared to declare. In spite of the seeming dominion of ambition and force, it is, after all, humility and patience which really subdue the hearts of men. To this principle of the real royalty of meekness and love Jesus Christ committed himself absolutely, in life and in death. He knew that the Kingdom of God, founded not on might, but on humility, service, and helpfulness, must yet give the law to all kingdoms and that this Kingdom, secure as the throne of the eternal Love, would endure and flourish when all others had vanished from the earth.

It will doubtless seem trite for me to remind the reader that Jesus realized here in our world the ideal of human perfection. All Christians know and confess this, but it does not follow that we understand it because we have frequently heard it mentioned. I venture to think that when we have fully pondered this amazing fact, we shall not lightly esteem its saving significance. This perfection is, doubtless, a presupposition of his Saviourhood in our technical explanations, but it hardly ranks in traditional theology as itself a power of God unto salvation. It holds no prominent place in the historic theories. It is, indeed, relatively depreciated as signifying nothing but a good example which is deemed to be a matter of slight consequence in comparison with an act of homage to God's government or a vicarious experience of penal woe. We will not reargue the questions involved in these theories; it must rest with each person to see the value and power of Christ's work in such aspects of it as he can clothe with saving significance. If he conceives that God was obliged by his law or by some one of his attributes to mete out a certain amount of suffering for human sin, and that Christ has endured that suffering in his stead so that he can escape it, then he will see his salvation in a penal substitution. It would not seem, in that case, to be essential to lay much stress on the kind of life Christ lived. Enough that his death was efficacious; that since salvation is an escape from penalty, he has provided the way of escape from it by enduring it for us.

I apprehend, however, that most persons who derive their ideas from the Gospels rather than from dogmatic systems, will find more meaning and saving power in that peerless life, full of humanity, full of divinity, than in such theoretic "plans of salvation." A perfect life is not a trifling phenomenon in human history. The moral influence of Jesus Christ in the world seems to me not to have been duly estimated by those who characterize it in such terms as "mere example." A purity like his could not come into our world without purifying. Such a life does not fail to reveal to men their sins; nor does it fail to honor and exalt the divine holiness and to show that the sinner can never be blessed in his sins. Such a life is itself a realization of God's holy love among men; it is holiness incarnate. It asserts, magnifies, and vindicates holiness not alone or mainly by any one thing it does or experiences, but chiefly by what it is. If you say: Christ honored the divine holiness in his death, I say far more: He honored it in all that he ever said, did, experienced, and was. If you say: Christ condemned sin on the cross, I agree, but go much further: He condemned it in his every thought, word, and deed. If you say that Christ's cross is saving and his blood life-giving, I agree, for his cross is the symbol of undeserved suffering and self-effacing-love, and his blood is the life which he gave because he gave himself for us. If God was in Christ, fulfilling in him the ideal of humanity, I submit that we should seek his saving value not alone in some isolated act or experience, however significant, but in his life and work as a whole. It is Christ himself, and no one single deed or experience, that is the full power of God unto salvation.

Christ realized the life of perfect union with God. Unlike other men, he had no sense of estrangement between himself and the Father. He never felt the divine requirements as a burden or regarded them as the demands of a foreign Power. The will of God was not only his law but his delight. "Not my will, but thine, be done" is the word which best sums up the inner life of Jesus. There has lived on earth one man who was absolutely sure of God and who was perfectly at home in God's world. His is the life of the true and loyal son in his Father's house. He is haunted by no fear, perplexed by no doubt, disquieted by no misgiving. In peace and confidence he finds his strength. The sense of God's presence was the very breath of his life. In him we behold humanity in perfect union with God.

The significance of such a life in our world cannot, I think, be exaggerated. What is the destiny of man if not to realize his union with God — to live in God's world not as a slave or outlaw, but as a son? What now, if there has lived among us One who has perfectly achieved this life of sonship — who has lived in such fellowship with God that he can truly say and show that no one knows the Father except him to whom he reveals him. Can we overstate the value and power of such a personality and such a life? Call him by what names you will; say he is God manifest or humanity deified; frame what explanations of his mystery you please, — his proper names are Jesus, Saviour — Christ, the Anointed — the Word, the Revealer of God — the Son of God, the chosen Agent of God in disclosing his will and his nature. Let theories of Christ's person be what they may, he can never lose his place of power if it is true that he has lived on earth the ideal life of fellowship with God. That in itself is a fact so amazing, so transcendent, that no dignities or prerogatives with which he could be clothed can exaggerate its importance. If Christ has lived the perfect life of sonship to God among men, we need ask no more. This fact alone constitutes him Saviour and Lord. All conceivable saving acts and powers are implicit in it. Let men heap upon him all the titles which reverence and adoring love can invent. They can never say of him anything really greater than that he realized in our humanity the perfectly Godlike life — that in him we see man at one with God.

In Christ we see also the universal man. He was a Jew by birth and education. He lived and labored among Jews. He respected their customs and obeyed their laws. He was a loyal and obedient citizen of the country in which he lived. But of Jewish peculiarities and prejudices we find nothing whatever in him. His character was in no sense local or national. His sympathies were in no degree limited by boundaries of country or limits of time. They were as wide as the race — as wide as the interests, needs, and sins of mankind. Thus in Christ we see realized the ideal of common, universal humanity. He was conformed to the type of social and religious life which belongs to the age and country in which he lived; but his life was in no way restricted or narrowed by these. It is evident that they were incidental to his life, and not at all the measure of it. His outlook on the world was too wide, and his insight into human life too deep, to allow him to set his heart on any temporary social organization or local type of religion.

The interpretation of Jesus' self-designation, "Son of man," which derives from it the meaning: the ideal man — the man to whom nothing human is foreign — is, doubtless, historically unwarranted. Still, the messianic meaning of the title very naturally suggests some such idea, which is, in any case, true and important in itself. He who came to rescue man to his true life as a son of God was profoundly concerned for every real interest of humanity. All specific acts and duties were regarded by him as having their significance and value in their bearing upon the welfare of mankind. Rules, ceremonies, and institutions are valuable if they promote the moral interests of men; they are worse than valueless if they become the ends to which man is but a means and are thereby made to cramp and belittle human life. They are all well and useful so long as they help men forward, but when they are made ends in themselves, then they become fetters on the human spirit and hindrances to the greater things — judgment, mercy, and the love of God. Your venerated Sabbath, said Jesus to his contemporaries, has ceased to be your servant and has become your master; this is an inversion of the true order; the Sabbath was made on man's account, not man on the Sabbath's account. This is a typical example of Jesus' attitude. His great concern was for men. He saw and estimated all that was local, temporary, and incidental in the light of what was permanent, essential, genuinely human, and universally true.

If the foregoing statements are founded in historical fact, it follows that in Jesus Christ we see humanity at its climax; he is the typical, representative man. His life and work must also partake in that representative character. His relation to mankind is such that in his career and characteristic acts and experiences we are to see revealed the true law of life for all men. We are to see in him, as did the Apostle Paul, the Head and Founder of a new spiritual humanity; his life is the perfect type of all Godlike life; he is the Captain of our salvation, the leader in whose steps we must follow. There must, then, it would seem, be some sense in which we must possess ourselves of his secret, repeat in ourselves his experience, live over again his life. This is a mode of thought which is certainly suggested by the conception of Christ as the representative, typical man. It has had but slight recognition, as Professor Candlish points out (see page 284), in the dogmatic theories of atonement. Sometimes it has been admitted as a corollary or pendant of the idea of judicial substitution; sometimes it has been transformed into a metaphysical theory of the universe and in this form has been thought to supply a philosophical basis for the idea of vicarious suffering; but, more commonly, it has been entirely neglected in traditional dogmatics and sometimes positively disparaged as opening the way to a mysticism in which there is held to be nothing profound except profound misunderstanding and confusion.

It is undeniable, however, that the idea in question has a prominent place in the New Testament. Our Lord declared that his disciples must take up the cross and follow after him. He evidently regarded the cross as a symbol of what others, as well as himself, must do and experience and not merely as denoting a service which he should perform for them. The Johannine tradition reports him as expressing the law of his own life thus: "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit" (Jn. xii. 24). But was this the law of his own life only, or of all Godlike life? It is clear that it is regarded as a universal law which was typically illustrated in Christ's life and death. The discourse continues: It is he who gives his life that saves it; if a man will be my servant, let him follow me. Again, he tells us that for the sake of others he consecrates himself to his life-work that they may be consecrated in truth. Consecrated to what? Obviously to the same true life to which he is devoting himself. The "truth" in which they are to live is the same as that in which he is living — the truth of a Godlike devotion, service, and self-giving. Beyond question the author of the Gospel understood such teaching to mean that we must follow Christ in such self-giving, for he elsewhere writes: "Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn. iii. 16). His is the pattern-life. Ours must be run in the same mould.

We instinctively feel, however, that such figures, drawn from the resemblance and relations of external objects, are inadequate. We want to express something more than copying a pattern, following in another's footsteps; even the term "imitation of Christ" does not wholly satisfy us. It is for this reason, perhaps, that religious thought has sought a terminology which should more strongly emphasize the idea of a close personal relation to Christ, the oneness of the believer's life with his. The Christian who contemplates the life and life-work of Christ representatively feels that all true life must be of the same kind with his — that the Godlike life in all men must be essentially the same as it was in the pattern-man; hence he conceives his salvation as consisting in life-union with Christ; he lives in Christ and Christ in him. In this reciprocal indwelling salvation is realized.

Now among all the New Testament writers it is Paul who has most graphically portrayed the Christian life from this point of view. It is, perhaps, the most characteristic thing in the apostle's teaching concerning salvation. The forensic features of his exposition were to have been expected. The wonder is not that he employs juridical conceptions in construing the work of Christ and in depicting the believer's appropriation of its benefits; the wonder is rather that he has so far transcended all legal modes of thought and expounded his doctrine of salvation in the vital terms of personal relationship. Let us place together some of the most characteristic expressions of Paul's idea that salvation is realized in repeating Christ's experience and sharing his life: "All we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." "If we died with Christ we believe that we shall also live with him." "Even so reckon ye yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. vi. 3, 4, 8, 11). "One died for all, therefore all died" (2 Cor. v. 14). "For ye died and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 3). "If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world," etc. (Col. ii. 20). "If ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above" (Col. iii. 1). "God quickened us together with Christ and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 5, 6). "I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20). "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the Church" (Col. i. 24).

The believer, then, according to Paul, dies with Christ, is buried with him, rises with him from his grave into a newness of life like his own, and sits down with him in the heavenly place. He repeats the experience of Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection; or, in yet other words, he fills out the sufferings of Christ which yet remain to be completed. I venture to say that this is the boldest, most novel, and original theory of salvation which has ever been advanced. It is not strange that theology has not known how to make any use of it and has, therefore, for the most part, entirely ignored it. No one of the traditional theories employs its terminology; into none of the legalist schemes can it be made to fit. It lends itself to the support of no plan of substitution, equivalence or imputation. It has a strange, mystical sound which makes it seem vague and hazy in comparison with the clear and definite conception of Christ as stepping into our place, paying our debt of penalty and so exempting us. It is strangely incongruous with all the favorite watchwords of back debts, vicarious payments, substituted punishments, and merit-treasuries. So obviously is it intended to describe something that happens in our experience, analogous, at least, to what Christ experienced, that it is hard to adjust it to the notion of a satisfaction rendered to God "wholly outside of us." The truth is that we have here in Paul himself, the alleged chief authority for a Christianized legalism, a mode of viewing Christ and his salvation which that legalism does not know how to appropriate. One can almost imagine that its defenders would brand this mysticism of the apostle, or whatever it is, as profound only in its misunderstandings, were it not for their wholesome dread of "talking down to St. Paul."

Do not these bold assertions of the apostle become intelligible if we regard Christ as the typical, representative man? If we hold with Paul that Christ is the second Adam, that in him we see what humanity truly and ideally is, then may we not also dare to hold with him that we must, in principle, repeat his life and death and resurrection in ourselves in order to realize his salvation? Must we not tread the path which he trod? Must we not "patient bear his cross" with him, die with him to sin upon it, be buried out of sight of the sinful world, and rise with him into the heights of his own holiness? Must we not realize the true, Godlike life in the same way in which Christ realized it? If he is the pattern-way, must we not walk in it? If he is the perfect life, must we not share in it? If salvation is sonship to God, if it consists in a life "new-charactered in Christ," as Bushnell used to say, then surely it must be realized on the same principles and in the same way in which the Captain of our salvation was made perfect (Heb. ii. 10). Sanctified and sanctifier are one. He is not ashamed to call them brethren. They tread the same path and as they together come before God's throne, his gracious word is: "Behold, I and the children which God hath given me" (Heb. ii. 13).

These citations from the Epistle to the Hebrews are typical illustrations of its conception of the representative humanity of Christ. He went before us in the endurance of whatever sufferings fidelity to one's vocation may involve. If occasion require, we must "go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach" (Heb. xiii. 13). Sharing our humanity (Heb. ii. 14), suffering through temptation (Heb. ii. 18; iv. 15), learning obedience by his sufferings (Heb. v. 8), and exercising through all his experience that perfect trust in God in which we must ever find confidence and strength (Heb. ii. 13; xii. 2), he delivers us from our bondage to fear (Heb. ii. 15), fills us with hope and joyous confidence in God (Heb. iii. 6; vi. 18–20), and thus becomes to his obedient followers the author of eternal salvation (Heb. v. 9). In the life of perfect trust, hope, purity, and self-sacrifice Jesus is the forerunner (*πρόδρομος*, vi. 20) and leader (*ἀρχηγός*, ii. 10; xii. 2), and hence the finisher or perfecter (*τελειωτής*, xii. 2) of our trust and hope. In no other writing of the New Testament is stronger emphasis placed upon the *imitatio Christi* than in this Epistle. Christ has lived the pattern-life; we must repeat his experience. Our obedience, our trust, our union with God, must be realized in essentially the same ways as were his. Our life must be of the same kind with his; it must be built upon the same principles, fortified and inspired by the same motives, and directed to the same ends. Far as he is above and beyond us, he is not thereby removed from all relation to us. That we should be told to live as he did is no idle mockery of our weakness. Every act of self-giving, every patient endurance of suffering, every triumph in temptation, is, so far, an achievement in the kind of life Christ lived. Every step on the path of duty and goodness, however short, is an approximation toward the perfect life.

The question now arises: From the standpoint of this representative relation of Christ to humanity, what significance would attach to his death? What could be the possible meaning of the apostle's saying that when Christ died, all died (2 Cor. v. 14)? Or, in what sense could he have conceived that Christ "died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves" (2 Cor. v. 15)? Such expressions seem to me to be based on the conception of a moral identification of men with Christ in which their salvation is realized. They must so really live over again his typical experiences that they may be said to die to sin on his cross and to rise with him into a newness of life. It may be thought that such language involves only a comparison between Christ's death and resurrection and the believer's ethical death to sin and his rising into a holy life; but it is noticeable that the language of the apostle is prevailingly not that of comparison but that of identification. It is obvious, of course, that an identification *in time* cannot be intended; the salvation of all men was not actually realized in and with Christ's death and resurrection. But *in principle* salvation for all was thus realized. The cross is the symbol of absolute devotion to God's will and of perfect love and self-giving. Every man who would attain to salvation in Christ must attain it by way of the cross; he must take up Christ's cross of sacrifice and make it his very own. He must be crucified with Christ, as Paul said he had been. The death of Christ is the culmination of a career of suffering in self-giving; it is the symbol of the profoundest pity and yearning love for men and of utter self-commitment to God; its meaning is expressed with the Sufferer's expiring breath in such words as: "Father, forgive them" and "Into thy hands I commend my spirit." The man who will be saved must die a similar death. He must die to self that he may live unto God. He must, in the realistic language of the Fourth Gospel, eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ if he would have life. The life of the truly saved man must be, as Dr. Bushnell expressed it, a Christ-ed life.

Theology has commonly seen in such expressions the idea that we must believe in the sufficiency of a substitutionary expiation wrought for us on the cross, or must receive Christ in the bread and wine of the eucharist. I fear that these interpretations make salvation too easy. If it can be shown that my dues have been paid by another, it does not seem to be any great moral achievement for me to accept the arrangement and to be glad to appropriate its advantages. If I can receive Christ and his salvation in a morsel of bread, the requirement seems simple and easily accomplished. But if I must learn what Christ's inner life means; if I must view his death as a self-giving which I must repeat in my own heart and life ; if I must see in his cross a crucifixion of all selfishness and sin, then salvation seems to me the most real and the most stupendous moral experience and achievement of which we can form any conception. So, I believe, Paul and John and Christ himself conceived it, and this conception as presented in the New Testament, so far from being merely incidental, illustrative, or subordinate to the notion of an external saving act, is the very heart and soul of the biblical doctrine of salvation. Be the expiatory expressions of Paul and of the writer to the Hebrews what they may, they are from the thought-world of late Judaism ; but the exposition, by both writers, of the actual realization of salvation is a transcript of moral experience and is presented in terms expressive of moral participation in the inner life of Jesus, the reproduction in the believer of the representative humanity of Christ.

If this idea is, as I believe, the most characteristic note in the New Testament doctrine concerning salvation, it is equally the most profound and morally exacting conception of the subject. "The modern mind" may, indeed, neglect or repudiate it because it is too high and difficult, but it can never bring against it the objections which it feels to theories of external substitution, namely, that they are at once morally unreal and rationally impossible. I have several times heard this question raised in all seriousness by Christian teachers : Granted that the moral interpretation is the more adequate and satisfying, do we not still need to use, for popular purposes, the terms descriptive of an external substitution? Are not men more likely to be moved by the idea that some one has borne their burden of guilt and penalty than by the idea that one has come to realize in our midst, and to introduce us into, the life of sonship to God? To many popular religious teachers this seems to be the case. Some theologians even are of the same opinion; hence their efforts still to commend to the men of our time some form of external substitution which seems to them acceptable. I cannot help thinking that these efforts are misplaced. I do not know to what extent the apparatus of externalism, realistically presented, may prove effective in evangelistic efforts among people unused to reflection; but so far as my observation has extended, it leads me to say that among thoughtful laymen, quite as much as in theological circles, the notions of substitution, expiation, vicarious penalty, and the like, are unacceptable and obsolescent.

To all this the theological pessimist may answer: "Too true; but the fact only shows the degeneracy of the times." Dr. Hodge, as we have seen, regarded the idea of penal substitution as so fundamental in the whole scriptural view of Christ's death, — as constituting the very substance of the biblical doctrine of salvation to such an extent that those who called it in question were to be regarded, either as not Christians at all or as perversely wresting the plain assertions of Scripture into accord with their personal prejudices.[1] I apprehend that few present-day theologians, however predisposed in favor of the seventeenth century, would go quite so far as this. Does the change mean progress or retrogression? On this question the reader must form his own judgment.

It is only incidental to my present purpose, however, to inquire what opinions are most acceptable or prevalent among various classes of persons. I am primarily concerned only with an effort to determine what is most central and characteristic in the Christian view of the subject. *Apropos* of this effort, however, I suggest to the reader to bear in mind this question and to put it to the test of his observation: What view of Christ's saving work finds fullest recognition and attestation in the Christian consciousness and experience of men? To what conception of the nature and method of salvation do men bear witness as being, for their minds and consciences, the highest, the truest, the most real and vital?

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[1] *Systematic Theology*, II. 479.

CHAPTER VII

THE RELATION OF CHRIST TO HUMAN SIN

WHAT is the relation of the sufferings and death of Jesus to human sin — its guilt, its penalty, its forgiveness? Did he assume its guilt and bear its penalty in order to secure its remission? Was his death a substitute for sin's punishment and so a means of creating a basis for forgiveness? Was his bitter anguish a reparation to God whereby his punitive anger was satisfied and the hindrance to the operation of his grace removed? All these questions are answered in the affirmative by the traditional theories, though with the most various explanations of the sense in which such assertions can be true.

All theories which hold that the death of Christ is the ground of forgiveness meet a difficulty not easily explained in the fact that in the Old Testament God is uniformly represented as a gracious God, willing and eager to forgive the sins of men. The writings of the prophets ring with the proclamation of a free forgiveness to all who truly repent: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live;" "If the wicked turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezek. xxxiii. 11; xviii. 21).

Now there are two ways in which this difficulty is met. On the one hand, it is said that these assurances presuppose the expiation of sin accomplished by the sacrifices. But the obstacles to the success of this explanation are very great. They are such as these: (1) The prophets do not recognize the sacrifices as being at all necessary to reconciliation with God. As we have already seen (pp. 17, 18), they set no very high estimate upon the Levitical ritual and never consider the offerings essential to obtaining God's forgiveness. Their spirit is well reflected in the words of that classic confession of sin in Ps. li. 16, 17: —

> "For thou delightest not in sacrifice; else would I give it:
> Thou hast no pleasure in burnt offering.
> The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:
> A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

Moreover, (2) sacrifices were allowed, in general, only for sins of inadvertence. For wilful crimes like murder and adultery no atonement by sacrifice was available (Num. xxxv. 31; Lev. xx. 10). Were such sins, then, utterly unforgivable? They must have been so if sacrifice was the ground of forgiveness. But how, in that case, could the author of Psalm li. rejoice in God's mercy and forgiveness, and how could Nathan assure David of the divine forgiveness for his twofold crime of murder and adultery? The fact that there was forgiveness for sins for which no offering was accepted, is proof positive that in the view which prevails in the Old Testament the real ground of forgiveness was the gracious disposition of God.

(3) The explanation in question encounters the further difficulty that the primary and fundamental idea of the offerings is not that of substitutionary punishment, but that of a gift or act of homage. The historical study of the institution of sacrifice has completely undermined the position in question.

(4) The one book in the New Testament which largely uses sacrificial analogies by which to interpret the work of Christ — the Epistle to the Hebrews — is most explicit in asserting that animal offerings were only ineffective types and shadows which were powerless to accomplish reconciliation with God, since "it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Heb. x. 4).

But even if all these difficulties could be surmounted — if the sacrificial expiations associated with the Levitical ritual were the basis of the prophetic proclamation of free forgiveness, all this would not only fail to prove that Christ's death was the sole ground of forgiveness, but would be inconsistent with that assertion; for if the Levitical atonements may constitute a ground of forgiveness, then, certainly, that ground is not first laid by the fact of Christ's death. I conclude that the assertion, that Christ's death is the ground of forgiveness, is irreconcilable with the known fact that God has always forgiven repentant sinners, and that it cannot be harmonized with the uniform teaching of the Old Testament prophets that he forgives out of pure grace on one condition only — repentance or reformation.

But another explanation is sometimes advanced: When, in Old Testament times, forgiveness is offered freely, apparently on condition of repentance only, it is assumed that the penitent looks forward to the atonement which Christ is to make and is saved by an anticipatory faith in a reconciliation of God to be accomplished in his death. This inference from the proposition, that Christ's death founds the possibility of salvation, encounters the difficulty that neither the Old Testament nor the New represents the faith of the saints of the old covenant as consisting in a confidence in an expiatory atonement yet to be made. The faith of Abraham, the great typical example, is never so described, not even by Paul. He believed God, says the apostle, and his believing was reckoned to him for righteousness (Rom. iv. 3). His faith is uniformly represented as a trust in a present divine promise and favor, in short, as trust in God, and on that condition alone he was accepted.

An additional objection to the theory under review arises from the conception that a saving deed can save in advance of its accomplishment. If Christ's death founded the possibility of forgiveness, then forgiveness was not possible before its occurrence. If it be said that salvation before Christ was by a retroactive effect of his death, then it follows, either that men were not really saved before Christ but were only waiting to be saved when he should suffer and die, or that the saving death is conceived not as a definite historical event, but as a name for a principle or law in God's nature and providence which has always been operative. In this view the sacrifice of Christ becomes a symbol of a universal law or method of God whose action is conterminous with the life of sinful and needy humanity. It is obvious, however, that this interpretation carries us far beyond the bounds of the traditional conception of the sense in which Christ's death procures the forgiveness of sins.

To limit the saving work of Christ to his death on the cross would exclude from salvation all men who lived and died before that event, as well as all who, in the centuries that have since elapsed, have not heard of it and acknowledged it as the sole ground of their hope in God's mercy. Is it the biblical view that no persons outside this limited number, living during a few recent centuries, have been saved? Some would answer: It is, indeed, true that Christ's historic work on earth is the one only ground of salvation, but it is also true that God's mercy is not limited to that relatively small area of human history which we call Christendom; the inevitable conclusion is that the grace of God in Christ will be offered in the next life to those who have had no adequate opportunity to embrace it here. On this view one must ask: Were, then, the Old Testament saints really saved in their lifetime on earth or are they also to have the opportunity to be saved in an intermediate state? The latter supposition would seem to me to be the unavoidable result of this argument. It is quite certain, however, that neither the Old Testament nor the New so conceives the matter. But there is little occasion to discuss this solution, since it is energetically repudiated by most of those who insist upon the formula: Christ's death is the sole ground of forgiveness. I would suggest, however, that by this rejection of the theory of future probation, orthodoxy casts away the most feasible method of supporting the traditional formula above stated. But this sacrifice is due, of course, to motives which arise in other quarters. Nothing can be plainer, however, than that this formula of orthodoxy is far more easily reconciled with the hypothesis of future probation than with the rival theory of the "essential Christ."

Such are some of the difficulties which beset a formula which, I must think, would not be so much used if its logical issues were considered. The appalling consequences which flow from such a conception, together with a strong desire to attain some more reasonable view of Christ's saving mission, must constitute my excuse for pointing out some of the results to which the traditional theories lead. If, as is commonly said, the death of Christ removed the obstacle in the divine mind to the forgiveness of sins and so founded the possibility of salvation, it is not easy to see how there could have been salvation for any before the occurrence of that event, and if conscious trust in the efficacy of that saving deed is the sole condition of salvation, then all who have not known and accepted it, that is, by far the greater part of the human race, have been hopelessly lost. The anticipatory acceptance of it centuries in advance, the retroactive effect of it, and the appropriation of its benefits in an intermediate state — these are the principal ways of escaping or mitigating the inevitable conclusion. The first two of these solutions give only partial relief, as they are intended to provide only for the Old Testament saints; the third is more effective since it opens a door of hope for the heathen; but orthodoxy, from Augustine onward, has looked with suspicion upon it and has commonly repudiated it.

There is another formula which is presumably intended to summarize the same views as those above noted, namely, "Christ died our death." We have already had occasion to note Dr. Denney's predilection for this formula (pp. 194, 195), which, unfortunately, is not accompanied by any corresponding disposition to explain it.[1] We are left to conjecture its intended meaning. Does it mean that Christ's dying on the cross, the yielding up of his spirit to God, took the place of our dying and exempted us from expiring? One might infer this meaning from much of the argument which is frequently used to support such propositions. For example: Paul believed that physical dissolution was a punishment for sin; now Christ came to endure in our place the consequences of sin; therefore his death for us was a substitute for our dying; "he died our death." This would be intelligible and would seem to be the import of much of the argumentation which proceeds upon the common Jewish theory (shared by Paul) that physical death was a punishment of sin. But we can hardly suppose that this is meant, because it stands in too obvious contradiction to the fact that death is no less the lot of mankind since Christ than before and comes to all, saints and sinners alike. If physical death is a consequence of sin, it is demonstrable that Christ has not "died our death" in the sense of exempting us from that particular penalty.

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[1] Dr. T. V. Tymms points out that while Dr. Denney never says explicitly that Christ bore the penalty of our sins, he uses language which can have no other meaning. Much of this language, he continues, "is exceedingly vague," especially the dictum: "Christ made our responsi-

We must, it would seem, seek for some other meaning for the word "death" as used in this formula. Does it, perhaps, mean spiritual or eternal death, the loss of the soul, the forfeiture of the true life? In that case the meaning would seem to be that Christ experienced God's condemnation in our stead. This might be held in either of two ways, either (1) that he actually experienced the wrath of God and the pains of hell, as the Reformation and post-Reformation theology commonly affirmed, or (2) that he experienced sufferings which were equivalent or adequate substitutes for man's eternal condemnation. In other words, he either suffered the penalty of sin or suffered *as if* he were enduring its penalty. The former supposition lands us in the strict penal theory; the latter

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bilities, as sin fixed them, his own"—words which, "if taken alone, might be explained in a variety of ways, and would not necessarily clash with the views of Anselm, Abelard, Luther, Calvin, Grotius, Edwards, Crawford, Dale, or even McLeod Campbell." *The Christian Idea of Atonement*, p. 453.

in some form of the rectoral or vice-penal theory. In the former case, "he died our (spiritual or eternal) death," that is, experienced our punishment, and so exempted us from it. In the latter case, "he died our death" (in the same sense) "so to speak" — suffered *as if* he were dying our death — experienced that which (for the purposes of the divine administration) was equivalent to our death and which answered the requirements of the law equally well.

Inasmuch as it is often impossible to determine which of these two widely differing meanings (if either) is intended by saying that "Christ died our death," it is difficult to deal seriously in argument with an assertion whose interpretation must be so largely conjectural. If the former meaning is intended, then the formula in question asserts that the innocent was punished in order that the guilty might go unpunished — that God's condemnation came upon Christ in order that having vented his anger upon the guiltless, he could refrain from venting it upon the guilty. This seems to be the most natural meaning of the saying: "Christ died our death." I will not discuss the conclusion to which this interpretation leads. For those who can entertain such a conception discussion would be useless; for all others, it would be needless. It seems to me that one who can adopt the principle which underlies the penal theory of our Lord's sufferings — that God is so just that he cannot forgive the guilty until he has first punished the innocent — thereby renders himself inaccessible to all considerations of equity and morality.

It is probable that to most persons who would use the formula under review, or some other intended to convey the same idea, the meaning of it would be the far more vague and indefinite one mentioned above. "Christ died our death" "as it were," or "so far as a sinless person could." He suffered *as if* dying our death; he endured pains equal to those ordained as penalties of our sins, or if not equal, yet answering the same purpose. He died our death in the sense that his death (viewed as the culmination of his sufferings) was substituted for our (spiritual) death. Apart from all questions of the possibility of such a substitution and of the evidence for it, this conception is certainly more tolerable, from an ethical standpoint, than the other. It has the disadvantage, however, of being far less clear and of leaving more questions unanswered. How, on the strictly retributive theory of punishment, can God satisfy his wrath against sin by requiring from the innocent sufferings which are not properly penal? What can satisfy the appetite for punishment but punishment? How can it be made to appear that sufferings which are not penal can answer the purposes of those which are? Is it a justifiable use of words to say that "Christ died our death," when the meaning is that he did not die our death, but experienced in his death suffering which is held to reveal God's displeasure at sin as well as the dying of our death would have done? And then there remains the chief question of all: What proof can be given which is adequate to show that Christ's death took the place of sin's penalty or served the same ends? Did Christ himself view his death in that light? Is it reasonable to say that the death of the Holiest had the same meaning or purpose as the death of the sinner? The governmental or quasi-penal interpretation of the statement that "Christ died our death" falls far below the penal interpretation in clearness and has little, if any, advantage over it in point of historical proof. My theory of the genesis and persistence of governmentalism is that it is the resultant of two forces: religious sympathy with the underlying assumptions of the penal theory and ethical revulsion against the inevitable consequences of that theory. The result of the latter has been a reaction against the notion of vicarious penalty, which has certainly proved useful in the development of thought on the subject of Christ's salvation. The governmental interpretation has served well as a point of departure, and marks a stage of real progress in the ethicizing of the doctrine of atonement, but it is singularly unsatisfactory if contemplated as a finality. In itself the theory is singularly unclear and indefinite, particularly on the points of special difficulty and importance. After diligent and repeated reading of the recent expositions of the semi-penal theories, from Dr. Dale onward, with the best intention of learning in what sense they mean to say that Christ bore our penalty or died our death, I have been forced to the conclusion that, aside from the more extreme forms of mystical and semi-pantheistic speculation, the modern adherents of the quasi-penal theories succeed best in wrapping themselves in an impenetrable nebulous haze.

There is still another meaning which it is just conceivable that the phrase, "Christ died our death," might be intended to convey. If "death" be regarded as the symbol or consummation of our earthly trials and sufferings, it might be meant that he shared or bore these with us. He might be said to have taken upon him our death, as he did our sicknesses. "He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows." In this case, it might be meant that "he died our death" in the sense of a sympathetic identification with us in the trials and sufferings which are summarized in death. On this understanding of the statement it would contain no idea of penal substitution, nor any such conception as that the condemnation due to our sins fell upon Christ. It is not likely, however, that any one would employ the phrase in question to express the substitution by strong sympathy to which we here refer. It is certainly one of the infelicities of many recent discussions of atonement that statements of this sort are freely made with no clear indication of what they are intended to mean. I would add to the objection made to the proposition under review by Dr. Forrest that "it is not scriptural and may fatally mislead,"[1] the criticism that, in the absence of explicit definition, it is singularly unclear and fatally beclouds the discussion of the subject.

In view of considerations like the foregoing I am led to the conclusion that the only ground of forgiveness is the divine grace, and that in no sense is God compelled to punish or to do something which is the equivalent of punishing, before he can forgive. There is forgiveness with him not because he has been propitiated, but because he is the gracious God whose mercy endureth forever. Christ's mission to earth is not to make God willing to save men but to make men willing to be saved. In him the grace of God that brings salvation appeared to all men. He did not come to procure, but to proclaim and bestow forgiveness. Salvation is grounded in the divine nature. God saves because he loves. The fact that he saves requires no other explanation than that it is his gracious will and nature to save men — and is capable of no other. All the mechanisms of expiation and satisfaction which men have interposed between the divine love and human salvation, would be themselves preposterous and impossible except on the supposition that they have their spring in the divine love. If, then, they are admitted, on all hands, to be grounded in the divine love, how can they procure or make possible its exercise? All schemes of expiation have this peculiarity: They are obliged to assume the divine love as their basis and motive in order to show how the operation of the divine love is made possible. Love devises the plan for removing the obstacle to its own exercise. It is justice which interposes this obstacle. Thus we come back to the crude notion of a separation of the attributes which treat and bargain with each other in the interest of their respective rights.

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[1] *The Christ of History and of Experience*, p. 239.

Many writers, shrinking from all such conclusions and conceptions, would say: It is not a question of placating one attribute that another may operate; God's love must be the motive and ground of salvation; but since it is *holy* love, it must so manifest itself as to assert the guilt of sin and to proclaim the divine condemnation of it. The method of salvation must conserve the divine self-consistency in forgiveness.

To such a formal statement I should readily enough agree. But the question at once arises: In what way or by what means is it necessary for God to express his righteousness in providing and offering forgiveness?

How, in point of fact, is this done in the work of Christ? Here is the crucial question. Here is where the difficulties begin and the differences arise. I may add that, in my judgment, here is where most modern writers on the subject become indefinite and unclear. Did Christ reveal or vindicate God's righteousness in his sufferings and death because in those experiences he was enduring something like punishment or some substitute for punishment? Did he suffer a withdrawal of God's presence? Was the face of the Father turned away from him in order that by that experience of desertion God's displeasure at sin might be so expressed that it need not be expressed in punishment? Was his suffering a substitute for man's penal suffering and so a satisfaction to the righteous anger of God?

A large number of mediating writers would answer questions like these in the affirmative. They will not say that Christ endured the wrath of God or bore the penalty of sin, but they are eager to approximate this conception as nearly as possible, and hence affirm that he suffered as if accursed, endured sufferings which were the moral equivalent of sin's penalty, underwent experiences which were a substitute for punishment and which answered the same end, namely, the vindication of God's holiness and the assertion of the ill-desert of sin. In this way, they say, God reveals his self-consistency in the work of Christ. He manifests his grace supremely, but in conjunction with it, makes an exhibition of his righteousness which shows that he is unalterably hostile to all sin.

We shall meet this quasi-penal theory in other connections and shall later subject it to further examination. At present I am concerned to indicate the method in which it answers our question: How is the work of Christ related to the forgiveness of sins? It answers thus: In order that God may consistently forgive, Christ must bear sufferings which somehow express sin's ill-desert and God's condemnation of it as adequately as punishment would have done. Christ's sufferings and death were a substitute for penalty and had the object and effect of vindicating God's retributive righteousness, so that in his sufferings we behold both the goodness and the severity of God. If the reader asks: How is the assertion proved that Christ's sufferings had this character? I must counsel him to exercise patience. We shall consider the "proof" in due time. It suffices our present purpose to know that this is the principle of the mediating or vice-penal theories which seek to stand midway between the penal and the ethical interpretations of Christ's work: God can now freely forgive because he has vindicated his righteousness in Christ's sufferings which were a substitute for punishment and answered its purposes.

Let us now return to the formal proposition on which we agreed, that in salvation God will make evident the evil of sin and his repudiation of it, and inquire how it is applied by theories which discard all rivalries and competitions among attributes and all notions of legal substitution.

By everything that Christ ever said and did he was making manifest the holiness of God and the evil of sin. The very idea of salvation to a Godlike life implies that sin is an opposition to God and therefore a state of hostility to his holy will. Were it otherwise, there would be no occasion for salvation — nothing from which man needs to be saved. Now all that Christ does for sinful men, in teaching, labor, and suffering, is done for them because their sin is an evil and accursed thing, separating them from fellowship with God and their own true destiny. And when, to win men from sin to holiness, he enters into deepest sympathy with them, bears their woes upon his compassionate heart and endures the most bitter griefs and tortures in his anxieties and labors to bring them to God — then those sufferings with and for them become the supreme revelation of his estimate of sin. The cross shows what love will do to save men from sin. It therefore becomes the measure of sin's evil and the symbol of God's estimate of it. The blood of Christ seals God's condemnation of moral evil and proclaims the supremacy of the holy love which will stop at no labor or suffering in order that men may be recovered to harmony with itself.

We may reverently say that God must condemn sin while saving men from it. But it does not follow that he must condemn it by one process, a penal substitution, and then save from it by another, a legal imputation. Nor does it follow that he condemns it by appeasing one attribute, and then saves from it by the operation of another. God condemns sin in the very act of saving man from it. How does a mother make manifest her estimate of the evil of a reprobate son's course of life? Does it appear that she disapproves his course because she first insists upon his imprisonment as a condition precedent to any effort to recover him to a good life? Or does she, perhaps, first proceed to punish one of her other children that she may make it clear that she is uncompromising in her moral strictness, and as an offset to the manifestation of grace which she intends to make toward the sinful son? To me it seems evident that her deep sympathy and sadness, her prayers and tears, her loving labors and entreaties, sufficiently show how she thinks and feels about the evil of his sin. It does not seem to me that she needs to do something special to make it clear that she disapproves her son's course of life. I think that the Gethsemane of her mother's heart expresses at once her hatred of the sin that is ruining her son and her yearning love of him.

I am familiar with the answer which is commonly made to considerations like this. There is no parallel between the two cases, it is said, since God is a Judge, a Ruler, a Sovereign, and must safeguard the interests of the whole moral system. Certainly, no one would mean to intimate that the human relations referred to are fully adequate to illustrate the relations of God to men. But I venture to maintain that they are quite as adequate and less misleading than those equally human analogies of which the legal and penal theology makes use. It was the paternal and not the legal illustrations which our Lord chiefly employed. When, therefore, it is said, as by Dr. Dale, that the paternal analogy breaks down when we apply it to the consideration of God's method in salvation, it appears to me that Christ's method of viewing the attitude of God to sinners and the relation of his own work to human sin, is explicitly repudiated.

We shall have occasion to recur to this same point in considering, later, the occasion and necessity of Christ's death and in discussing in what sense it can be said that God was satisfied in the work of Christ, or specifically in his sufferings and death. Meantime, let me say again distinctly that whether the manifestation of righteousness which the ethical theory finds in Christ's labors and sufferings for men be satisfactory or not, the charge frequently made that the representatives of this theory lightly estimate sin or regard God as lenient or indifferent toward it, is baseless and unjust. It does not follow because I deny that God *must and always does* punish all sin, that I, therefore, deny that God is unchangeably holy and must disapprove and condemn all sin, — any more than it follows because I may not see fit to punish every fault which I see in my child, that I am therefore indifferent to such faults. It is time that this method of making capital for the penal and make-believe penal theories were discontinued and that the answers to the real question at issue should be considered simply on their merits. The question is: How did God express his righteousness and condemnation of sin in the work of Christ? and there are three generic answers. The penal theory says: He did so by visiting the penalty of sin upon Christ. The quasi-penal theories say: He did so by causing Christ to endure sufferings which were the moral equivalent of the penalty of sin and which subserved its purposes. The moral theory says: He did so by Christ's work of holy love on man's behalf. If you ask what sin is in the eyes of God, look on the sufferings and death of Christ endured in his desire and effort to save men from sin; they are the answer.

At this point at which there is so much misunderstanding and misrepresentation, I will illustrate and fortify the observations just made by quoting the words of one who has vigorously championed what is commonly known as the "moral theory" on the ground that it *is* the moral theory. "This then," writes President Henry C. King, "is the very thing that the grace of God accomplishes. God's suffering love in Christ secures such a triumph of righteousness over sin as punishment could never gain. It wins the man into the covenant friendship with Christ, into sympathy with him who was in absolute sympathy with God. It puts his sin, in the first place, in the light of the suffering love of God, and brings home the shame and the guilt of it to the heart of the sinner as no punishment could do. It breaks the hard heart. It brings him to share God's hatred of his sin. Not hell, real as that is, but the vision of the suffering heart of God — of what sin costs the Father — convicts of sin with fulness. This self-sacrificing love of God in Christ brings the man into the sharing of Christ's purpose also — the sharing of his life of love. There is here the promise of the end, of the complete triumph over sin. The child now shares the Father's own purpose for him, and enters heartily into it. He has begun a divine covenanted friendship that only needs to have its way to make sin to cease. This is the real victory of God over sin, and it is wrought by love. "In Christ" there is a genuine at-one-ment.

Why, then, is the cross of Christ necessary? Why is so large a place given to it both in the New Testament and in the Church? It is not necessary as death or crucifixion *per se.* The facts of the atonement are not physical, and the sin of man cannot be necessary to the plan of God. Not as a propitiation of the wrath of God. God himself is everywhere represented in Scripture as back of this work of Christ, and the nearest possible approach to expiation of sin is the ceasing of sin. Not as a punishment of Christ for our sins, or as an expression of God's anger with Christ. Both are ethically inconceivable. Christ suffers — he is in no true sense punished, and neither character nor the proper consequences of it can be directly transferred. Not as a mere governmental device of God to substitute something for the punishment of the sinner. The suffering love of God is far more effective than punishment, but God does not suffer for this end. Nor, finally, as a designed dramatic exhibition of God's love to man. God loves and suffers in Christ, but Christ does not come primarily to *show* the love and suffering of God, but actually to seek men, to redeem them from their sin because he loves."[1]

It is entirely legitimate for those who think that the moral theory does not lay sufficient stress upon the holiness of God, to seek to show that this is the case. It is quite proper for them to argue that their opponents' conception of the divine holiness is not adequate, or so adequate and true as their own. They may appropriately enough contend that retribution is the primary impulse and requirement of the divine nature. But they are seldom content with efforts of this kind. They will have it that representatives of moral influence views make light of sin in their theories, and imagine that God does not regard or treat it seriously. This is an insinuation which it requires some charity to regard as a mere misapprehension. It is but fair to insist, on the other side, that exponents of the so-called moral or subjective view of atonement do not, in fact, lightly esteem sin or fail to emphasize the essential hostility of God's nature to it, and they do not believe that their opinions are justly open to the charge of so doing. So commonly is the charge made, however, and, in my judgment, so unwarrantably, that I will quote, in refutation of it, one other advocate of "benevolencism." "Men must be saved morally," says Professor B. P. Bowne, "if saved at all. If God were simply a Being of good nature, and without interest in the righteousness of his creatures, he could easily make them happy by mere power and at no cost to himself or to any one else. This is the sentimentalist's notion of what ought to be. This notion is forever vacated by the cross of Christ. God will be at infinite cost to save men, but he will save them morally or not at all. It is a moral world in which we live; and we are under the inexorable law of righteousness.

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[1] Article on "The Atonement" in *The Congregationalist*, October 27, 1898.

There is no provision made for relaxing moral demands. The promised land is only for those who attain unto the spirit of righteousness. The wilful and disobedient may wander in the desert forever; they cannot enter in. The only hope for sinners consists in their being saved from sinning. There is and can be no other salvation which the moral reason will accept. The work of Christ, as thus morally conceived, demonstrates, we repeat, the righteousness of God."[1]

What, now, shall be said of the much debated question regarding the relation of Christ to the guilt and penalty of sin? The traditional answer is, that he assumed the guilt of sin which God imputed to him, and suffered the penalty of it (or its equivalent) in our stead. But what is guilt? It is a name for the *quality* which belongs to moral evil; it is a term to describe the character — the blameworthiness of sin. How now could a sinless person assume this *quality?* How could blameworthiness be imputed to the blameless? Such assertions lose all appearance of plausibility as soon as the meaning of the word "guilt" is considered. The theological books speak of guilt as if it were a kind of entity which Christ could take up and carry, as he carried the cross. Such representations seem to me extremely naïve.

Christ had a clear sight and an intense sense of the guilt of sin. Only a holy being, such as he was, can adequately realize in his thought and feeling the exceeding sinfulness of sin. This is the truth underlying the theories of expiatory confession or vicarious repentance which are elaborated by Drs. Campbell and Moberly. As expressed by these writers they are, indeed, paradoxical. The sinless Christ does not, properly speaking, repent of or confess sin for us. That we must do for ourselves. Repentance is the part of sinners, not of the sinless. But Christ knew, as no other ever did, the awful contrast of sin with holiness, and he entered into fullest sympathy with mankind in their sufferings and sorrows under the blight and curse of moral evil. And into his own sense of sin and condemnation of it, he conducts those who follow him into the heights of his own holiness and make his estimates and ideals of life their own.

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[1] *The Atonement*, pp. 97–99.

And how did his life-work stand related to sin's consequences? If these consequences are solely retributive — designed only for the satisfaction of distributive justice, then, certainly, Christ did not vicariously endure the consequences of sin. That the guiltless should bear punishment in this sense is a contradiction in terms. Did Christ, then, bear chastisement or discipline? Some have affirmed this and have thus maintained a semblance of the old penal theory. But this conception is only a pale image of the post-Reformation dogma. Whether one may properly use such language is a question of defining words. If by "chastisement" is meant suffering inflicted in consequence of sin for the benefit of the sinner (the usual meaning of the word, as I suppose), then it is obviously absurd to speak of Christ as being chastised. The more indefinite term "discipline" one may use, if he means by it what the Epistle to the Hebrews means in saying that Christ learned obedience by the things which he suffered, or was made perfect by his sufferings. But such a term carries us outside the circle of ideas commonly denoted by "penal." To say that Christ was punished is absurd. To say that he was chastised is equally absurd, if frankly and seriously meant. In actual usage the assertion is probably one of those vague, non-committal affirmations in which the more recent forms of governmentalism commonly take refuge.

In what sense, then, was Christ "made sin on our behalf" (2 Cor. v. 21)? In what sense did he "become a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13)? In the sense that he entered into the perfect realization of the misery and guilt of our sin, suffering these with and for us, as Edwards says, by strong sympathy. In his oneness with us the evils which flow from sin afflicted his spirit with deep and awful distress. He entered perfectly into the conditions in which sin had involved us. He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. He descended to our prison-house that he might share our woes with us. This he did as a means to our deliverance. He stooped to conquer us. In his pure heart he felt the curse of evil and with us tasted its bitter fruit. Thus by sympathetic identification — through the vicariousness of love — was he "made sin on our behalf" in the only sense which can have any ethical meaning or reality; thus by perfect union with men in the misery and wretchedness which flow from sin, did he share the curse of sin for us. And by this vicarious suffering with and for sinners he has condemned sin and exalted holiness. Would you see what sin is? Look on the cross! See how sin regarded and treated incarnate love! Would you learn what holiness is? Look again on the cross! See what holy love will do and suffer to raise man out of the curse of sin into harmony with itself. The cross expresses the verdict of holy love upon the worth of man and its condemnation upon the sin which would destroy him. Hence the cross is the symbol of the most precious truths of our faith. It summarizes what is central in the saving work of Christ because it expresses what is supreme in the bosom of eternal love. God forbid that we should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER VIII

THE NECESSITY OF CHRIST'S DEATH

Why was it necessary for Christ to suffer and die, and what, for his consciousness, was the purpose to be achieved by such an experience? These two questions are quite inseparable because the nature of the reasons why he must suffer and die would be determined by the object which his death was to secure or promote. But these questions involve others. Was his death the direct object of his whole career, or was it an experience which lay in the path by which he sought some end beyond itself? Did he come into the world to die, or did he die in consequence of being what he was in such a world as this? Must we regard the question respecting the necessity of his death from the side of its human, historical causes only, or may we also interpret it as grounded in a divine purpose and as a factor in a providential plan for the salvation of mankind?

To the question immediately in hand: Why was it necessary for Christ to die? the most various answers have been given: In order, by enduring the penalty of sin, to appease the wrath of God and so to open the way to forgiveness; that the Old Testament prophecies might be fulfilled; because the will of God had so ordained; to render homage to the divine law against sin and so to express God's holy displeasure toward it; to attest his own perfect submission to the divine law of self-sacrificing love; to consummate his fidelity to truth and righteousness in a world which was hostile to his ideals and purposes. Some of these customary answers are only formal, as when it is said that prophets foretold the Messiah's death, or that the divine will required it. We still have to ask: What was the ground or rationale of this requirement? Until we have found some answer to that question we have made no progress; we remain content with saying: It was necessary because it was prophesied or decreed that it must happen.

In reviewing the references to the death of the Messiah in the Synoptic Gospels and in the earlier discourses in Acts (pp. 42 *sq.*, 55 *sq.*), we saw that while Jesus spoke of his death as inevitable in view of the increasing hostility of the people, he also regarded it as having a great providential purpose to serve in his saving work. The early apostolic teaching viewed the subject in a similar light; his death resulted from human hatred, but it was, at the same time, designed by Providence to prove a means to the accomplishment of the messianic salvation. Now the great problem for primitive Christian thought was this: In what way did the death of Christ serve this end? How did his suffering secure or contribute to man's recovery from sin? We have in the New Testament the beginnings of the long history of philosophizing on this question.

One thing is clear: Christian thought can never rest content with merely summarizing the human historical conditions and circumstances which occasioned Christ's death. It is true, of course, that he died because the people of his time opposed and hated him. He died the death of a martyr, for a martyr is a heroic witness to the truth of certain convictions and ideals which he maintains at whatever cost to himself. But the death of a martyr even cannot be wholly explained by reference to the opposition and obloquy which he encounters, apart from the motives and convictions which give meaning and purpose to his life. Our question, then, takes this form: Did Jesus have a settled life-purpose, a providential mission, which he felt himself bound to accomplish at whatever cost of labor and suffering, and how did his death, as the acme of this labor and suffering, stand related to it? That he had such a purpose, and what it was, is evident on the face of the Gospels. That purpose is stated in various terms, but they all mean essentially the same: to found the Kingdom of God; to enable men to know God as their Father and to live as his true sons; to seek and to save the lost; to bear witness to the truth. It is also evident that, as time went on, it became more and more clear to him that he would have to die in the accomplishment of this object, and that his death, so far from being the defeat of his plan, would contribute to its realization. He regards himself as subject to the universal law: "He that gives his life shall save it." Hence the giving of his life is to be a potent means to the ransom of many.

It is worth noting, I think, that in these most significant expressions of Jesus concerning his life-purpose and his manner of realizing it, he speaks not of death but of the giving of his life. Now certainly the life-giving of which he was speaking involved the experience of dying, but are the expressions, on that account, synonymous? Was the meaning of Jesus in saying that he would give his life for men, exhausted in the idea that he would expire for their benefit? Or if we, for the moment, disregard the characteristic expression of Jesus and keep to the term which theology has chiefly employed, we must still ask: What was death, what did death mean, to Jesus? What was his own death as he viewed it? Is there the slightest intimation in his teaching that he regarded death in general, or his own death in particular, as the penalty of sin? That was a popular theory at the time, and it was soon brought over into Christian thought and applied in the effort to explain the saving significance of Jesus' death, but of this current Jewish opinion there is as little trace in the teaching of Jesus as there is of any of the theories which were then current concerning the origin and propagation of sin. It is safe to say that for the mind of a Jewish Christian, trained in a legalist mode of thought, and to whom it was axiomatic that Christ's death was a means of salvation, no explanation would lie so near to hand as this: Death is sin's penalty; Christ died, though sinless; therefore, in so doing he was enduring the penalty of others' sins and has thereby exempted them from its endurance.

It is this circle of ideas — employed, among others, by Paul — which is the determining factor in the older forms of orthodoxy. It has not been, however, sufficiently considered by theologians that it proceeds upon the unquestionable correctness of a certain ancient Jewish theory of the origin and nature of sin. It was not the Old Testament conception — certainly not the prevailing view of the Jewish canonical writers[1] — but it was a current theory in rabbinic Judaism and happens to have been the conception of the subject in which Paul had been trained. That circumstance has done more to determine the form of Christian speculation on the subject of Christ's death than all the references of our Lord himself to the subject. The penal interpretation can hardly dispense with this Jewish speculation. It is therefore quite natural that Professor Denney, in his effort to commend the proposition that Christ "died our death" to "the modern mind," should undertake a defence of the idea that physical death is the consequence of sin.[2]

There is no reason to believe that our Lord thought of his own death in any negative or isolated way. It was not a being deprived of life; it was not even the mere experience of being killed. It was a part of his self-giving; it was the transition to fuller life and to a completer victory; it was a saving of life by giving it. In this sense he came to minister and to give his life; in this sense it was needful that he should suffer that he might enter into his glory. The grain of wheat must fall into the earth and die if it would bring forth much fruit. The question, in what sense he died for men, is the question in what sense he gave his life for them, and that again is synonymous with the question, in what sense he came to minister. Jesus himself coupled all these expressions together, and in his thought and teaching they explain each other. Death, for him, stood in no contrast to life; it was the completion of life. His death was a part of his ministry, his service, his self-giving for the ransoming, that is, for the saving, of many. Why, then, did he give his life? Was it that he might influence men? That he might attest the truth of which he had come to bear witness? That he might reveal God in his compassion or disclose the evil of sin and so condemn it? We can see all these results — and others — as the fruits of Jesus' self-giving, but, so far as we know, he presented no analysis of the particular objects of his self-devotion. It is not the manner of self-effacing love to announce the specific purposes which it expects to secure by its services. Especially incongruous is the idea that Jesus proposed to display the divine love in order to impress men, as if a mother were to say to herself: "I will so love this child of mine as to impress him with the evil and shame of disobeying me." Love is no such analyzing, calculating prudence. Love gives because it is its nature so to do, and Christ gave himself for men not that he might reveal, display, or secure something, but because he was a great lover of men, and great love means self-absorption in service and sacrifice for its objects. He gave himself for mankind, because for love it is supremely blessed to give.

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[1] *Cf.* Tennant, *The Fall and Original Sin*, pp. 118, 119: "It would seem that death is presupposed in Gen. iii. 19 ('for dust thou art,' etc.) to be a natural consequence of man's earthly origin; in other words, death was decreed for man from the first." "And the doctrine thus attributed to Genesis is generally admitted to be that of the Old Testament as a whole. Death is treated everywhere as the inevitable outcome of natural human limitations."

[2] See *The Atonement and the Modern Mind*, pp. 90–107.

We have had occasion to observe how common it is for their critics to represent all interpretations of the death of Christ which repudiate its penal significance and view it rather as the culmination of his life of self-giving, as making a kind of exhibition of love for an ulterior end. It is no wonder that those who deem this characterization fair and just should never weary of insisting that it is a singularly superficial and unsatisfying view. If the premisses of the argument be granted, the contention in question seems to me, indeed, quite demonstrable. The idea that God so loved the world as to send his Son that he might display his love in order that men might be impressed by it, is best shown to be unsatisfactory by the circumstance that no serious or influential Christian thinker ever held it. It is a controversial caricature adapted, if not designed, to render easy the refutation of the opinions which it purports to represent.[1] For myself, I hold that Christ came to realize in the world the ends of God's holy love. His whole life-work was consecrated to this object. He taught and labored and suffered and died to accomplish it. His life reveals God; his death reveals God — for they are not two but one. He did not live for one object and die for another. He did not live to magnify God's mercy and die to magnify his wrath. If ever there was a mission, a life-work, an experience which was all of a piece — which was animated by one central, unifying purpose, it was his. His whole aim was to bring God to men, to found the Kingdom of God among men, to bring to realization the life of God in men. Now this work has many aspects and consequences which we may properly single out for separate mention. When men are brought face to face with God, his benevolence is apparent to them; his holiness is disclosed to them; their own sinfulness is unveiled; their possibilities and privileges are discovered. Christ lived and died to secure all these results, but the basis of them all is the fact that he made real and living the compassionate love and holy requirements of God; he influenced men because he revealed and interpreted God to them; his whole meaning lies in this mediation. He came and lived and wrought to bring God and man together; he brought God near to man that man might come freely to God; he revealed God's fatherhood that man might know his possible sonship; he disclosed and illustrated God's holiness that man might know and hate and forsake his sin. For these ends he came and lived and labored, and he died in the cause for which he lived and for the ends for which he came.

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[1] In illustration let the reader consult the preposterous caricature of the moral view in Dr. Dale's *Atonement* (pp. liii.–lv. of the Preface to the seventh edition, and elsewhere) to the effect that it teaches a purposeless and meaningless *show* of love for which there was no moral necessity. See the trenchant criticism of Dr. Tymms, in which the utter irrelevancy of Dr. Dale's illustrations and the misconceptions underlying his arguments are exhibited, in *The Christian Idea of Atonement*, pp. 179–183.

Such was Jesus' conception of his own death, so far as we can gather it from the few references which have been preserved to us. I point out again that there is not a trace in his words of the idea that he was to die to appease the wrath of God, or to protect his dignity, or to safeguard his government. Whatever be the source of these ideas, they are foreign to the consciousness of Christ. They may be held, on one ground or another, to be authoritative and true, but the fact remains that — so far as we have any means of knowing — they had no place in the thought-world of Jesus; within the first Christian century tradition had not yet ascribed to him any such ideas. But it does not follow that his death was conceived by him as having a mere "subjective" import or that he viewed it as a means of creating an impression. Surely the choice does not lie between this preposterous conception and the notion that his death was the penalty of the world's sin. His death was no more subjective in its meaning and value than his life was. Both reveal God and illustrate his nature and perfections, and both illustrate the same divine nature and perfections. But certainly there are aspects of God's being and action besides punitive justice which might be illustrated in the work of Christ. Is that the only thing in God which is important enough to lend an "objective" significance to Christ's saving mission? Is it retributive righteousness or nothing? If so, then there certainly *is* as little gospel in the teaching of Jesus as the penal theory finds there.

In the light of the foregoing considerations our question recurs: In what lay the necessity of Christ's death? Why did it appear inevitable to the mind of Jesus himself? The view of some that Jesus had from the beginning of his public ministry, or even throughout the whole course of his life, a definite expectation of being put to death cannot be established by historical evidence. The supposition which goes further and represents his death on the cross as the direct object of his whole mission on earth is obviously a dogmatic inference. Just when he arrived at the clear conviction that a violent death awaited him, we have no means of knowing. We have seen that, apart from one or two doubtful intimations, it was late in his ministry when he declared such an expectation. But the question is less important, if we retain the historical point of view, than it has been commonly assumed to be in doctrinal speculation. We have almost no means for carrying this or any similar question into the long silent years preceding his public work. We must raise our questions at the point at which history begins to furnish some data to proceed upon; that point is the ministry of the Baptist and his introduction of Jesus to the people, with which the apostolic tradition begins.

Now from that point onward we see that Jesus has definitely consecrated and committed himself to the messianic mission. There might well, even at this period, have been questions in his mind as to the specific ways in which this mission was to be realized and what his particular experiences were to be in its prosecution. The Gospels do not warrant us in supposing that Jesus had pictured to himself in advance exactly the forms and measure of opposition which he would encounter and all the precise turns which events would take as he proceeded with his work. But they do make it clear that he had determined from the beginning on what methods and principles his messianic task was to be undertaken. It is involved in the situation which confronts us at the opening of his ministry, and was apparent to the mind of Jesus, that his methods were not to be those which were popularly expected and approved and that his whole conception of the Messiah's character and function was fundamentally different from that of the people.

In this fact all subsequent results and consequences were implicit. What, now, were those methods and principles of his whose consistent maintenance and application involved everything that befell him? They begin to appear in the story of his temptation. It matters not, for our present purpose, in what precise degree the narrative of this initial trial is historical. It is probably a pictorial, symbolic description of the inner experiences of Jesus at this critical period. But if so, it is none the less true, significant, and instructive in its bearing upon our Lord's plan and purpose than it would be if read as a strictly historical narrative of outward events. The point of chief interest which the story brings to light is the fact that Jesus definitely repudiated at this time the program of popular messianic expectation. He would not win acceptance by startling displays of arbitrary supernatural power. He would turn no stones into bread, hurl himself from no temple-pinnacle, bow down to no tempter who offered, on such conditions, a cheap popular success. The narrative is predominantly negative in its cast; it portrays what he refused to do, but, by contrast, its positive significance is great. His was a widely different conception of messianic service and success from that popularly current, and this conception of his he was sure had the sanction of the divine will. He knew his plan to be grounded in the divine purpose and in its prosecution he would live and work according to the divine word, would worship and serve God alone.

Now just what his program should be in concrete fact, only the subsequent course of events can show; but the principles of a plan of life are already here. He has struck a note immeasurably higher than that of popular aspiration. We do not follow him far on his way before we begin to see the consequences in which his plan involves him. He had consecrated himself absolutely to a work for the spiritual good of men. He had devoted himself to the work of revealing God to men, as he knew him. He had determined to found a Kingdom of God among men — a Kingdom based wholly upon love and employing neither force nor fear for its support. He would magnify and enthrone in the hearts of men the holy requirements of God. He would teach men that it is vain to worship God with gifts and sacrifices, while affronting him with pride, selfishness, and hate. He would show men what God is that they might more truly see what he requires. He would be himself a way to the Father. He would unveil to men their secret sins that they might be led to seek the divine mercy. For these ends he would live and, if need be, suffer; in the effort to accomplish them he would labor and, if need be, die. Such was the mind of Christ with respect to his life-work. He had come to give himself for the ransom of men — to liberate them from their slavery to small views of duty, low ideals of life, and unworthy conceptions of God. Did he, then, come to die for men? Yes, and much more. He came to die for men because he came to live and work for them; to pour out for them every energy of his being; to give his life, his very self, all that he had and was, for their salvation.

His death is not an isolated end in itself. It did not represent for his consciousness the sole and immediate object of his being in the world. Even at the last he was able to pray: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Such a prayer would have been unreal if he had conceived that the whole meaning and success of his work lay in the experience of dying. In that case the presence of an "if" would have meant a weakening of his consecration, a wavering of his fidelity. With the view of Christ's death often assumed in the dogmatic interpretation of it — that he came into the world for the direct purpose of experiencing by dying the death-penalty of sin — it seems impossible to reconcile the prayer "Let this cup pass from me," even though conditioned by the words "if it be possible." For surely in that solemn hour he could not for a moment have imagined it possible, that is, consistent with the divine will, for him to relinquish, after all, the purpose for which he had come and to abandon the work of saving the world. His work would not have been a failure if he had died a painless or accidental death. His death would not have been less significant if the Roman method of execution had been by means of a gallows instead of a cross. His work would not have been less complete if the circumstances of the time had not occasioned his being wounded by nails and a spear. Nay, if divine Providence had found it "possible" to grant his prayer and to have let the "cup pass from him," his saving work of holy love would not have failed, though it would have lacked the highest illustration and attestation of which we can conceive. The cross in Christian thought does not mean a piece of wood of some particular shape, but is a symbol of sacrificial and suffering love. Nor does the blood of Christ mean the fluid which was a part of his physical body ; it is a symbol of the life which he gave for men. In this sense only does the biblical language about drinking his blood have any intelligible meaning.

Was there, then, no necessity for Christ's death beyond its human inevitableness ? I have already indicated the insufficiency of such a view, and trust that what has already been said has sufficed, in some measure, to illustrate its inadequacy. The necessity lay not alone in the historical circumstances but in the nature of the work which he had undertaken in those circumstances. And, as we have seen, Jesus knew that his plan and aim were accordant with the divine will and wisdom. This being so, it was not possible for him to be spared the experience of death. His self-giving must involve it, since it was to be an unreserved self-giving. His obedience to the Father's will must be an obedience even unto death. The cup that the Father had given to him he must drink. He must stop short of no task and no experience to which serving, self-effacing love could lead ; he must give himself to the uttermost. That was Jesus' own view of his death. It was unavoidable and providentially necessary, not as being the one separate event on which the salvation of men depended, but as being an indispensable part of a divine life-purpose and life-work of love.

In reviewing the references of Jesus to his prospective death which have been preserved in the Gospels, we had occasion to note the reasons for thinking that the parabolic saying about the bridegroom being taken away (Mk. ii. 20) was either allegorized by the tradition or belonged to some later stage of his teaching than that to which it is assigned (p. 42). We also observed the historical difficulties in supposing that John the Baptist could have described the Messiah in advance as the suffering Lamb of God who should take away the sins of the world (p. 94). Suppose, now, that these critical considerations be regarded as decisive; suppose that these sayings are examples of a translation back into the earlier history of its later events and meanings, it should still be said that the case is not correctly judged apart from two facts: (1) That such a tendency to find the full meaning and issue of events in the earlier stages of a career in which they quite inevitably emerge, is perfectly natural; and (2) that such an interpretation, in a case like the present, springs from a correct instinct and illustrates an insight which accords with Jesus' actual attitude toward his life-work. His death for men *was*, from the first, implicit in his life for them. Whether John the Baptist knew it and said it or not, Jesus *was* from that day when they met at the Jordan, the fulfilment of Isaiah's vision of the patient Servant of God who in his undeserved suffering for men should be led, as a lamb, to the slaughter; he was by virtue of a divine purpose in which his life was grounded and by his absolute consecration of himself to that purpose, the One who should both bear and bear away the sins of the world; he was the One who had already taken upon him the sicknesses, sorrows, and sins of mankind through sympathetic identification and sacrificial love. If he bore them on the cross, it was because he had borne them in his life; if in that last hour he most of all felt the woe and burden of human misery, it was because that was the hour in which the very meaning and purpose of his whole life were concentrated. He was the sin-bearing Lamb of the prophetic vision; he was the One who should die for the nation and who from his cross of sacrifice should bring together the scattered children of God and draw the whole world to himself in interest, sympathy, and devotion.

The considerations which we have thus far adduced as bearing upon the question, why our Lord's death was necessary, are of a historical rather than a speculative character. It is true that Christian thought early entered upon a speculative treatment of this question and, as time went on, developed the most elaborate *a priori* constructions in its treatment of it. It proceeded, now from certain conceptions of the relations and transactions between the Almighty and Satan, now from the necessity of recruiting the ranks of the angels, or again from the dramatic representation of an impending conflict among the rival attributes of Deity. Where the views taken were not so crude or realistic, they were still very definite and positive about the divine plans, purposes, and decrees in which the necessity in question was grounded. The standard treatises on atonement, from Anselm to Edwards, do not concern themselves with the historical aspects of the subject or make any considerable use of the available facts which are known to us regarding the attitude of Jesus himself to his own death. The traditional theories find their point of beginning somewhere in the nature or eternal purpose of God. This nature or purpose is first defined *a priori*, and from these definitions, in which the whole result is logically implicit, the theory of Christ's death is gradually deduced. Great gifts and devoted piety have been consecrated to these efforts, and many profound and important truths have been elaborated and defined in them. I make no sweeping objection to theological speculation. It has its own importance and use. Indeed, we cannot avoid it. History itself often forces us into the field of speculation if we would deal at all seriously with its facts. But my contention is that the examination of questions like that which we are here considering, should start from history and advance on historical ground so far as relevant data are available. We should, at any rate, recognize the difference between historical investigation and theological speculation and should seek to direct and control the latter by means of the former. We may properly enough rise from the ground of historical fact into the upper air, but when making excursions in that region, we shall always do well to remind ourselves of what Lipsius says, — that when one ascends in a balloon, he should never permit himself to indulge the supposition that he is travelling by rail.[1]

We shall have occasion later to consider more particularly the problem with which theology has been so much occupied: What is the relation of Christ's saving work to the ethical nature of God? It may be well, however, to point out here the bearings upon that question of the considerations thus far adduced. These may be summarized in two statements: (1) The death of Christ was a part of his life-giving, his ministration for the ransoming of many, and has therefore essentially the same significance as his life; and (2) His whole life-work of self-giving was grounded in a divine purpose of grace for mankind and was therefore a supreme revelation of the will and nature of God. To this point we are brought by a consideration of the facts of Jesus' teaching and consciousness. Now, however far we may proceed in an effort to show how our Lord's life-work, or his death specifically, reveals and expresses God, we should try to keep to the same path on which we have already entered. We may fairly assume that the God who was pictured in our Saviour's teaching is the God whose purpose he believed he was fulfilling, whose nature he was expressing and whose will he was satisfying. If we agree that Christ's work in life and in death expresses God and realizes his will, I submit that we should seek to derive our conception of God's will and nature from Christ himself. It is wholly unwarranted to desert the consciousness of Christ at this point in the argument.

Let me ask the reader briefly to review in his mind the mode of argument on this subject which characterizes all the older theories — Anselmic, Grotian, and penal. Do they sustain the test which we are here proposing? Do they derive their conceptions of the God whom Christ (especially in his death) is supposed to express, vindicate, and satisfy, from Christ himself? Is the Deity whom they define recognized by Christ or reflected or assumed in his teaching or his prayers? Let us see. For Anselm the primary idea of God which appears in the work of Christ is that of a Sovereign whose first concern is to guard and assert his dignity. The nearest human analogy to the God of Anselm is the feudal baron. Is that idea particularly germane to Christ's conception? For Grotius God is a Ruler who must safeguard his laws. If they are broken, somebody must suffer in vindication of their authority. Did Christ present God under any such form of representation? For the penal satisfactionist God is a Judge who must dispense so much penalty for so much sin. The sin has occurred, the penalty must follow. The primary requirement of God's will is vengeance. The best illustration of this Deity is Shakespeare's Shylock. Now these are the conceptions — more or less qualified and inconsistently employed in many cases — of which the older orthodoxies are composed. Are they Christian, or are they partly late Jewish, partly heathen, partly speculative?

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[1] Man kann auch im Luftballon aufsteigen; nur darf man sich nicht einbilden wollen, dass man mit der Eisenbahn fährt. *Philosophie und Religion*, p. 208.

That the theories in question contain, in a one-sided and exaggerated form, some important truths I gladly admit. Such forms of thought have held their place in the Christian world, not chiefly on account of the errors, but rather on account of the truths which they cover. There is some truth in the late Jewish ideas about God; there is some truth in the heathen conceptions of his being and action. But they are not so true as Jesus' conception of God; at any rate, they are not so appropriate as furnishing materials for Christian theology. My complaint against the older forms of thought is precisely this, that they have derived from Jesus the conviction that his work, and specifically his death, expressed or satisfied the ethical nature of God, and then have not derived from Christ himself their conceptions of what the ethical nature of God is. This is "the head and front of their offending." They have taken one premiss from Christ and one from elsewhere. The common belief was that it was found in Paul, and if a certain factor of Paul's thought be regarded and estimated in a one-sided, isolated way, a plausible claim may here be made. But whether from Paul, Apollos, or Cephas, it was demonstrably not taken from Christ. Apart, now, from particular words and phrases employed by Paul, I contend that the best proof that the older orthodoxies (for there have been several with wide differences among themselves) are not accordant with Paul's most original, characteristic, and specifically Christian conceptions, is the fact that they have issued in so many inferences which he never suggested. How easy it is to deduce from the arguments and illustrations of a logician more than one view of a subject, especially if you never raise the question: What is the determining principle of his thought? More than one view of atonement can be deduced from Augustine and from Calvin, according to the selection which you make of passages, and it is demonstrable that three different theories may be drawn from Edwards's short essay on the subject — the penal, the governmental, and the ethical. Indeed, we have no need to go so far afield for illustrations. The penal, governmental, and mystical theories of atonement have each pretty clear marks of distinction from each other. Which did Dr. Dale hold and advocate? In one book Dr. Strong certainly defends the penal theory and in another seems, to me at least, to have adopted a theory more mystical than that of Frederick Denison Maurice; yet there is no intimation and seemingly no consciousness on his part of any fundamental change of opinion. The reviewers have generally credited Dr. Denney with being an advocate of penal substitution, but this verdict he himself appears to reverse since he denies that such terms as "legal" or "forensic" are applicable to his views. What now if the Christian world should suddenly fall to regarding and treating the writings of any one of these theologians as it has commonly regarded and treated the letters of Paul, — as furnishing an authoritative norm for all Christian speculation, — what theory of atonement should we be required to hold?

My conviction is that there is a fundamental difference of method and procedure among those who discuss our present subject, which appears at the very point at which we are now standing. The question at issue is, whether when we have said that Christ's death expresses God, we shall then try to see and to show how it expresses him by the aid of what Jesus has revealed concerning him, or by the aid of some definition of his nature derived from other sources. Shall we be content to clothe that supreme event of Jesus' experience in the meaning in which, so far as we can learn, he himself clothed it, or shall we impose upon it a significance which we have derived from some speculative analysis of the divine attributes? This latter, whether rightly or wrongly, is what theology has commonly done. I do not mean that the historical theories have not quoted texts from the teaching of Jesus. But I do mean (1) that even these texts have been read, not so much in the light of his whole teaching and work as in that of subsequent reflection, and with no critical consideration of the question, whether the phrases from the Gospels which have been most prized for the theological purpose in hand were not themselves examples of such reflection; (2) that these theories have not even purported to build primarily upon the teaching of Jesus; (3) that they have attempted for their purposes no study of Jesus' consciousness of God and of his own mission as a whole; (4) that Christ's own specific ideas on such primary points as the ethical nature of God, and the relation of his own death to his work as a whole, have received little or no consideration, and (5) that upon his conviction that his death was necessary and revealed the divine will and nature have been imposed definitions of that will and nature which were utterly foreign to the thought-world of Jesus. The old theologies in their treatment of Christ's death have taken the formal principle of their constructions from Christ and the material principle from other sources. There is doubtless some choice among the sources from which this principle has been taken — Paul's juristic phraseology, the world of chivalry, of commerce, of legislation, and of *a priori* speculation. Some of these sources supply more appropriate illustrations of Christian truth than others; but none of them may properly determine the form of a Christian doctrine of salvation; no one of them can supply a content for the consciousness of Jesus or give the law for the interpretation of his life and death. Is Jesus' death to be explained from himself or from some superior source of light? Here lies the deepest difference among theories. Here is where the ways part.

CHAPTER IX

THE SATISFACTION OF GOD IN THE WORK OF CHRIST

It is one of the principal contentions of the older theories of atonement that in the work of Christ, and specifically in his death, a satisfaction or reparation is made to God on account of human sin. This so-called "objective element," or "Godward reference" of Christ's sufferings, is the one constant factor in the theories which are commonly called orthodox. But the agreement among these theories is, as we have had occasion to notice, only formal. Anselm, Grotius, Edwards, Shedd, Dale, Lidgett — all assert "objective" satisfaction; but there will be found to be no agreement among these writers as to the occasion or nature of this satisfaction. This circumstance not only detracts considerably from the force of any argument *e consensu*, but easily occasions confusion and misunderstanding in expositions and discussions of the subject.

The differences of view to which we here allude arise very naturally from the difficulty of conceiving and defining the sense in which God can be the object of a satisfaction by means of Christ's sufferings. Of course, the general idea which the historic theories try to construe and apply is that by Christ's death some effect was wrought upon God whereby he was enabled to do what, otherwise, he would have been unable, in consistency, to do. But precisely what was this effect, and what is the rationale of it? How and why should the death of Christ accomplish it? On these questions the greatest divergences of view have appeared, giving rise to rival theories which, closely considered, are as irreconcilable with each other as are the "objective" and the "subjective" types of explanation.

Now if it is correct to say that, on account of sin, God's anger is implacable until he has either punished it in full, or inflicted sufferings equivalent to sin's penalty upon some one who takes man's place, and that Christ's sufferings were the vicarious substitute for man's punishment, then it is easy to see what is meant when it is said that those sufferings constituted an objective satisfaction to God. In that case they appeased and placated his wrath; they propitiated and quenched his indignation, thereby enabling him to be merciful, as he could not otherwise have been. This is the strict penal theory of satisfaction. It is the post-Reformation doctrine and the theory of such modern Calvinistic divines as Drs. Crawford, Hodge, and Shedd. In my opinion it deserves this commendation, that it is the clearest and most consistent attempt to apply frankly and fearlessly the idea of a satisfaction rendered to God by the suffering of a substituted victim. As we have seen, there are objections to it, such as that it is founded on a heathen and not on the biblical conception of God, — to say nothing of the specifically Christian conception, — and that it predicates a most astounding separateness of Christ from God, in view of the fact that they had been previously defined as partaking eternally in the same essence; but with these objections we are not now concerned. It is doubtful if the theory was ever carried out in strict consistency; certainly most expositions of it display important concessions and qualifications of its principles, the most common being in the form of such phrases as: "so far as possible," "as if," and "as it were." Nevertheless, it is a heroic attempt, and those who hold, with whatever inconsistencies and aberrations, that Christ vicariously endured the penalty of sin, may properly be said to believe in an objective, propitiatory satisfaction to God's wrath. I revert to this theory here only for illustrative purposes. Happily there is little occasion to argue against it; its statement is its sufficient refutation.

We must recall next the long series of attempts to show how the death of Christ satisfied God in some other way than by appeasing his appetite for punishment. Anselm's was one of these. God was satisfied by the death of Christ because his dignity was thereby sustained; Christ's sufferings afforded a reparation to his offended honor. How this could be we need not stop to inquire. It was made possible to the mind of Anselm by his regarding the life of Christ as a precious gift which he presented to God — a gift whose value outweighed the enormity of sin. This gift so gratified the Sovereign's sense of his dignity that he saw fit, in consideration of it, to overlook the insult offered him by human sin and to reward the giver by conferring salvation upon those who attach themselves to his person. Closely considered, Anselm's is the most anthropomorphic of all the historic theories of satisfaction. The private dignity of the Sovereign, the traffic between him and his Son, and the payment of surplus merits to men, are not characteristically biblical conceptions. The *Cur Deus Homo* is wonderfully acute, but its plausibility disappears when one no longer believes, with the mediæval metaphysics, in the substantial reality of logical concepts. It is a masterly juggling with abstractions. Imagine Christ making a present of his life to God, and God in turn presenting him with salvation to distribute to his followers, because he is so well satisfied by the gift; imagine this, I say, as an account of Christ's saving mission. Such is the "objective" satisfaction made to God's honor in the theory of Anselm; Christ's death is an act of deference to his dignity — a compliment, one may call it, so gratifying that it allays all resentment and even moves the Almighty to generosity. But the point to be observed here is that Anselm's is not a consistent, unqualified, "objective satisfaction" theory after all. It is only quasi-objective. Anselm's most fundamental propositions are usually qualified by an "as if." It is *as if* sin affected God thus and so, and *as if* he received a compensating gratification. I will add that to me it seems *as if* Anselm dimly discerned the unreality of his own reasoning. At any rate he strikingly illustrates the difficulty and unclearness with which the idea of satisfying God *ab extra* was applied by a thinker of great subtlety and acuteness.

The Grotian theory has a still different conception of the satisfaction which is afforded to God by the death of Christ. Here the death of Christ satisfies God because it is an act of homage to his law and government. It illustrates, not his determination to punish, but his zeal to maintain the majesty of his moral rule. God is satisfied when his authority is vindicated in the sufferings and death of the Redeemer. It is evident that this is a compromising, mediating theory. It lacks the clearness and definiteness of the penal view. I will not repeat the criticisms already made upon it, but simply call attention to its unclearness at the point in question. The notion of placating God's wrath is weakened down into that of asserting the justice of his government. The Grotian view has, indeed, the important advantage of discarding the monstrous idea of an appeasement of God; but the conception which it substitutes provides no clear answer to two questions: (1) What can be meant by vindicating those abstractions called God's law and government? and (2) Assuming the feasibility of such a vindication, how does Christ's death, contemplated as a penal example, accomplish that end? What is the "law" of which the rectoral theory speaks? Probably it is, in theory, the moral rule of God in general, but in reading the writings of its advocates one gains the impression that it is, in practice, the Mosaic legislation. In any case, how is God propitiated by having his "legislation" vindicated, and how should this legislation require Christ's death? I can conceive the idea that God may be gratified at having the Mosaic law obeyed, but this notion falls far short of an "objective" satisfaction which so appeases his wrath that he does not need to appease it further in punishment.

The advocates of the penal theory maintain — correctly, as I think — that the rectoral theory is a halfway house in which reflective thought can never permanently rest. Let us put the question to the test by reference to a concrete example. All will agree that among modern theologians there is no more masterly logician than the elder Edwards. In his treatise on *The Necessity of Satisfaction for Sin* he begins by saying that God must either punish sin or else there must be rendered to him some compensation which shall balance the greatness of the injury done. Instead of saying with the penal theory: God must punish all sin, either in the persons of the guilty or in the person of some innocent substitute, he introduces the idea of another course of action than punishment which is supposed to answer the divine purposes equally well — some "other compensation" which will support his "rectoral justice" as adequately as punishment would do — which will "magnify the law and make it honorable." Now assuming that all this is entirely intelligible, it is also purely formal. The crucial question is: How, in actual fact, did the sufferings of Christ serve this end? How did they take the place of punishment for sin and thus "objectively" satisfy God's hostile feeling toward moral evil as well as punishment would have done? Or, as Edwards puts it: How did Christ "bear the wrath of God" and so satisfy for sin?

To this question Edwards answers that he could do so "in no other but these two ways": (1) He had "a great and clear sight of the infinite wrath of God against the sins of men, and the punishment that they deserved," and (2) He "endured the effects of God's wrath." Christ had in his own heart and experience an acute realization of the evil of sin; he saw it as God sees it and condemned it in his feeling as God condemns it. He bore the burden of our sins through that sympathetic identification with us which his love accomplished. He endured God's wrath "in the sense he had of the dreadfulness of the punishment of sin." By his experiencing the *effects* of God's wrath Edwards means that God dealt with him *as if* he had been angry with him, though, of course, he was not. He forsook him on the cross, "withholding from him the pleasant ideas and manifestations of his love," although at that time, as always, he "infinitely loved him." Thus, says our author, Christ suffered the wrath of God "in such a way as he was capable of," but explains that he was not "capable of" suffering it at all in reality, since "God did not hate him but infinitely loved him." Christ suffered *as if* under the wrath of God — "*as though* he had been the object of God's dreadful wrath" — and this quasi-endurance of wrath Edwards is able to call the "full and complete equivalent of what we owed to divine justice for our sins."

It is not strange that this exposition, despite its use of the old terminology about necessary punishment and equivalent satisfaction, was felt to be a fatal weakening of the old Protestant doctrine. In my opinion it was a complete surrender of it. An equivalent punishment in Christ's death — however energetically asserted — is not maintained; instead, we have a substitute for punishment which is not punishment, but is regarded *as if* it were. The theory reduces to two principles: (1) Christ perfectly realized the heinousness of sin and the justice of God's condemnation of it, and (2) He suffered the effects of God's wrath in the sense that he suffered *as if* he were the object of that wrath, though he was not.

The first of these propositions is one of the main contentions of the moral theory, and in the exposition of it Edwards has given classic expression to the fundamental principle of that theory in words already quoted elsewhere, "A very strong and lively love and pity toward the miserable tends to make their case ours; as in other respects, so in this in particular, as it doth in our idea place us in their stead, under their misery, with a most lively, feeling sense of that misery, as it were feeling it for them, actually suffering it in their stead *by strong sympathy*." How much "objective" satisfaction to God, in the sense of the penal theology, is there here in this idea of Christ's perfect moral identification with us, "by strong sympathy," in our misery and sin? Obviously, none at all. This principle yields no propitiation to wrath. The sympathetic identification which love accomplishes doubtless pleases, but it does not placate, God. In its relation to God's moral nature, this procedure and experience of love do not render him gracious, but show how gracious he is. They are a disclosure or revelation of the nature of God and in that sense a satisfaction of it, but not in the sense of an appeasement or placation of anger.

Apparently conscious that the first "way in which Christ was capable of bearing God's wrath" utterly failed to meet the theoretic requirement of an equivalent compensation to justice, which had been asserted, Edwards evidently meant to fill the gap by the definition of the second "way." This is the substitution of Christ's sufferings *as if* they were penal, for sufferings which would have been really penal. The difficulties here arise from the unclearness and moral unreality of the explanation. After the laborious preparation — comprising fully two-thirds of the Essay — for a demonstration that the sufferings of Christ constituted a full and precise equivalent (being infinite) to the penalty due to man's infinite sinfulness, it seems a "lame and impotent conclusion" to be told that he endured indirect effects of God's wrath, by suffering as though he were really enduring the wrath itself. The realistic language of Edwards in which he pictures God as permitting the devil to "torment the soul of Christ with gloomy and dismal ideas," seems rather to enhance than to relieve the moral unreality of the conclusion. If Christ could really experience the wrath of God, it is easy to see how he could placate that wrath; but I submit that the assertion that he could placate that wrath by suffering *as if* he were experiencing it, is neither clear in itself nor easily believable in the absence of evidence.

That this alleged endurance of certain indirect effects of God's wrath amounts to the suffering by Christ of the plenary punishment of sin — *quod erat demonstrandum* — I must leave it to the reader to judge; to me it seems to fall far short of it. But waiving this point, what is the evidence that Christ endured the effects of God's wrath with the purpose or result of procuring his favor and of removing obstacles to forgiveness? It must, in candor, be said that the only apparent evidence is furnished by the initial definitions which are framed by the author out of his own inner consciousness. I do not forget that biblical passages are cited in supposed proof; but I think that the most ardent admirer of Edwards would admit that their application defies all known principles of scientific interpretation. I will give one example. Edwards regards the assertion that Christ suffered the full punishment of sin "or offered that to God which was fully and completely equivalent to what we owed to divine justice for our sins," as being conclusively proved by Ps. lxix. 5: —

> "O God, thou knowest my foolishness;
> And my sins (guiltinesses) are not hid from thee."

It is evident, says Edwards, from numerous New Testament passages, that Christ is here speaking, and that he is describing the sin and guilt which God imputed to him and vicariously punished in his sufferings. Apart from any estimate of this "proof," it will be noticed that it is alleged to prove more than the author's argument attempted, namely, an actual punishment of sin in the sufferings of Christ. This incongruity is typical, and illustrates the difficulty which the great theologian found in explaining and applying his idea of satisfaction. Now God is satisfied by wreaking vengeance; now by having his dignity honored; now by having his rectoral justice acknowledged. The Essay of Edwards is penal satisfactionist, Anselmic, and Grotian in turn, and also contains the elements of the moral interpretation of Christ's work. The Anselmic notes are incidental. Leaving these aside, we may say that the definitions and main argument are penal satisfactionist, and the conclusions contain a mixture of the rectoral and moral theories. It would not be easy to name a treatise of equal length on the atonement which contains so many incongruous elements. It is a Grotian edifice built upon a penal basis, with Anselmic and ethical embellishments. Why this extraordinary combination of diverse explanations of our Lord's saving work? Why, if not because of the difficulties inherent in the idea of a propitiation of God from a state of wrath to a state of mercifulness, an appeasement of his anger so that he may be at liberty to forgive, which the Essay undertakes to explain and to justify?

If the reader who may have been unable to receive the penal theory of propitiation finds the doctrine of satisfaction as expounded by Grotius and Edwards also unpalatable, there is little likelihood that he will be much better satisfied with more recent expositions of the rectoral theory. If Grotius and Edwards could not make it plain and convincing, we may well suspect that what is required is, not better advocates, but a better case. We will briefly adduce, however, one or two more recent illustrations of the effort to explain how Christ's death wrought some effect upon the nature or feeling of God which rendered possible, facilitated, or conditioned the action of his grace.

In his Essay on Atonement in *Lux Mundi*, the late Bishop Arthur Lyttelton lays down the proposition that "the death of Christ is the propitiation of the wrath of God" (p. 285). We naturally ask: How and why? I find it difficult to obtain a clear answer. The nearest approximations to it are made in the following statements: "In the death of Christ a manifestation was made of the righteousness of God, of his wrath, the absolute hostility of his nature to sin" (p. 290). The writer goes on to say that "this manifestation of divine justice might have been made by mere punishment; it became a propitiation, in that he, the self-chosen victim, by his acceptance of it" (of what?), "recognized the righteousness of the law which was vindicated on the cross" (p. 290). "He was involved, so to speak, in all the consequences of sin, even to the enduring of the very sufferings and death which in us are the penal results and final outcome of sin" (p. 297). Remembering, now, that Dr. Lyttelton energetically rejects the theory of vicarious punishment as a "terrible misconception" (p. 307), does he really answer the question which we have proposed? Does he show how Christ's death propitiates God's wrath? Formally stated, his reply is, that in the death of Christ God revealed the righteousness which otherwise would have been manifested in punishment. Is this properly called a propitiation of wrath? Is an involvement "so to speak" in the consequences of sin any proper equivalent to the penalty due to sin? But even if it were, can it be proved that Christ was conscious of experiencing his sufferings and death *in the place* of the world's penalty and as a substitute for it, which had the purpose commonly associated with penalty, namely, the assertion of vindicative justice? No one doubts that Christ's work was a manifestation of God's righteousness in his life and death. The question is: Was it a manifestation of retributive righteousness, made as a substitute for penalty? Can it be shown to have been so in the consciousness of Christ, or in fact? If it can, Dr. Lyttelton has certainly missed his opportunity in this essay.

Mr. Lidgett, while purporting to base his doctrine of satisfaction primarily upon the conception of fatherhood, still asserts an "objective" propitiation. He holds that satisfaction is made by an act which is, among other things, "an offering of homage and reparation to the law."[1] To make this satisfaction, Christ met and submitted himself to "the manifestation of the wrath of God against sin." To him death came "charged with the utmost power to express both the wrath of God against sin and the undoing brought about by sin" (pp. 272, 274). Christ "tasted to the full of those penal conditions which reveal the wrath of God against sin." The author even goes so far as to speak of Christ's "submission to the punishment which expresses the mind of the Father and asserts the supremacy of the law" (pp. 269, 282).

These definitions may be clearer to others than to myself, but I experience great difficulty in assigning any intelligible meaning to such phrases as "a reparation to the *law*," "submission to a *manifestation* of wrath," and "tasting of *penal conditions*."[2] These terms forcibly remind me of the statement which one often hears in defences of the "Godward reference" of Christ's death, that his sufferings exerted an effect on the *relation* of God to sin or sinners. If terms of this sort are capable of any clear explanation, it is much to be desired that some of the able writers who use them should furnish it. When once they were explained, the next task would be to adduce some evidence of their truth. If Christ's sufferings so manifested God's wrath as to be a substitute for the world's punishment, there ought to be some available proof of the fact in his words and deeds. If his sufferings had that character, Christ must have known it, and if he knew this substitutionary suffering to be the primary object of his mission on earth, it is incredible that he should give no expression to that knowledge. The fact remains that he gave utterance to no such idea. There is no evidence that he possessed any such idea. The only apparent proof to the contrary is derived from his exclamation, in the words of a Psalm, on the cross. Surely it is preposterous to suppose that Jesus should give no clearer expression than this is alleged to be to the chief meaning and main purpose of his life-work. The truth is that the conception that Christ's sufferings were substituted for man's punishment for the sake of expressing and so propitiating the wrath of God, is the product of dogmatic tradition and is supported by no known fact in the life or words of Jesus. It is a speculative theory and has no basis in history. Hence it is necessarily set forth by naked assertion since it is capable of no proof. A few isolated texts are indeed summoned to its aid *ex post facto ;* but in most modern books which undertake its defence, it retains its place through the sheer force of tradition and association, the only real grounds on which it can be consistently held having been entirely abandoned.

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[1] *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*, p. 268.

[2] Since writing the above I have observed that Dr. Tymms confesses the same difficulty of understanding these assertions of Mr. Lidgett and of harmonizing them with his general position. See *The Christian Idea of Atonement*, p. 454.

This brief review will suffice to illustrate the drift of thought, within traditional lines, on the subject of a satisfaction rendered to God by Christ's sufferings. Propitiation has been weakened down to an act of homage to law; God is no longer represented as the recipient of a ransom or reparation by which his wrath is assuaged, but as appeasing himself by self-expression. Atonement has become, even in writers of unchallenged orthodoxy, an expression of vindicative justice which is conceived to coincide with the revelation of the divine grace and to accompany and condition its exercise. And this is called the "objective factor," the "Godward effect," of Christ's work. The revelation of God's mercy is "subjective," and the parallel revelation of his holiness is "objective." I am making no complaint of the course which theological thought has taken, but it does seem to me unfortunate that writers on atonement should still continue the use of traditional terms whose meaning has either wholly changed or wholly disappeared. To propitiate God means to make God merciful. If we mean that, let us use the phrase; otherwise not. An "objective atonement" in the traditional dogmatic sense means an appeasement of which God is the object; if we mean that, let us say so; but to insist upon the use of the term "objective" to denote one aspect of God's self-revelation in Christ as over against some other aspect of it, is utterly confusing and baffling to all clear discussion of the subject. If all that is meant by "objective" is that God in saving men makes evident his righteousness, then all theories are objective.

But, not to engage in profitless strifes about words, let us return to the main issue. If the penal view of substitution and satisfaction is morally intolerable, and if the quasi-penal views are too vague to admit of clear statement and discussion, what conception of the subject can we adopt? For myself, I can form no idea of substitution which appears to me at all tenable, except that which Edwards defines as substitution "by strong sympathy." To my mind, Christ made our case his own by his "very strong and lively love and pity toward the miserable." He suffered for us by suffering with us. "In all our affliction he was afflicted." "Himself took our infirmities, and bore our diseases," spiritual as well as physical. His sufferings were vicarious, but their vicariousness was the vicariousness of love.

Now since the conception of satisfaction is determined by that of the substitution which lies behind it, I conclude that God was satisfied in the work of Christ in the sense of self-expression and self-satisfaction in sacrifice. God is satisfied in revealing his nature and in achieving in his world the ends of his wisdom and holy love. The notion of a satisfaction *ab extra*, a satisfaction of which he is the object, an appeasement or placation of his wrath through some innocent person's experience of punishment, or of the equivalent of punishment, is morally intolerable when clearly and consistently held, and vague and undefinable in proportion as its harshness and immorality are explained away. God never needed to be atoned into love, nor did he ever require from his perfectly holy Son the endurance of unspeakable suffering as a substitute for sin's penalty, for the vindication of his honor or his government. God was satisfied in the work of Christ because it is the nature of the divine love to give, to serve, and to suffer with and for its objects. But Christ's sufferings neither had the character of punishment, nor did they serve the ends of retributive justice. They served the ends of holy love which stoops to conquer sin and serves and gives to the uttermost because it is at once supremely benevolent and supremely holy.

Substitution "by strong sympathy" and satisfaction in self-sacrifice — that is a summary statement of my conclusion. But how justify so daring an aberration from dogmatic tradition? On what grounds are such definitions maintained? I answer: Chiefly on two grounds, the one ethical, the other historical. (1) These are the only notions of substitution and satisfaction with which I can associate any ethical reality, and (2) they are the only conceptions of these subjects which I can deduce from the words of Christ and from the facts which are known to us concerning his consciousness. Christ, so far as we know from the Gospels, never conceived of himself as bearing men's sins by a literal or legal substitution; he suffered for the guilty, not at the instance of punitive justice, in order to placate God, but at the instance of infinite love in order to reveal God and to bring the life of God to bear upon the life of man. And this Christ has done as no other ever did. He has perfectly exemplified the Godlike life — the life of sacrificial love. He has shown us that it is a law of the divine perfection, and therefore a law of universal application. It is the law for human life, because it is a law of the divine nature. All the heroic devotions of earth are but illustrations of it. It is the dying which ends in fuller life, the self-giving which yields a fruitage of victory and joy. And why? Because it is the law which God has impressed upon creation, and it is lodged in the heart of the world because it lives and reigns forever in the heart of the eternal Love.

> "A picket frozen on duty, —
> A mother starved for her brood, —
> Socrates drinking the hemlock,
> And Jesus on the rood;
> And millions who, humble and nameless,
> The straight, hard pathway plod, —
> Some call it Consecration,
> And others call it God."[1]

Let us next raise the question, whether the theories which so energetically repudiate these "subjective" views as insufficient, do really succeed in carrying through the notion of a satisfaction of which God's wrath or penal righteousness is the object. We will begin with the theory of vicarious punishment. We must first broadly distinguish righteousness and mercy. The former is the *quid pro quo* principle in God which requires him to punish all sin to the full — so much penalty for so much sin. The exercise of grace is conditioned upon the execution of that penalty. Christ takes it upon himself and thus by satisfying the divine wrath against sin fulfils the condition on which alone forgiveness can be granted. Of this satisfaction God is said to be the object; but, in the last analysis, is he? Who originated this scheme? God himself, of course. "Grace drew the wondrous plan." The doctrine is, then, that God in his love provided a way by which his punitive justice might be satisfied. The "plan" originated with him and was the expression of his nature. He was the subject of the satisfaction before he was the object of it. He could never have been satisfied *by it* if he had not first been satisfied *with it.* His anger could never have been appeased if his love had not found a way to appease it. God acts in the matter of man's salvation before he is acted upon. A subjectivity lies behind the alleged objectivity. God himself originates the scheme which appeases him. It would seem, then, that he must be disposed to be appeased in advance. Everything goes back to the divine love after all. The alleged objectivity of the satisfaction provided is only a name for the reflex effect of God's own thoughts and purposes. God's justice is appeased because in his love he determined to be appeased. This is a conclusion to which Augustine, with all his legalism, was driven, and even Calvin quotes his words with approval. "God did not begin to love us when we were reconciled to him by the blood of his Son; but he loved us before the creation of the world, that we might be his children, together with his only begotten Son, even before we had any existence. Therefore our reconciliation by the death of Christ must not be understood as if he reconciled us to God, that God might begin to love those whom he had before hated; but we are reconciled to him who already loved us and with whom we were at enmity on account of sin."[1] Elsewhere Augustine writes: "Was it indeed so, that when God the Father was wroth with us, he saw the death of his Son for us and was appeased toward us? Was then his Son already so far appeased toward us that he even deigned to die for us; while the Father was still so far wroth, that except his Son died for us, he would not be appeased? *Unless the Father had been already appeased*, would he have delivered up his own Son, not sparing him for us? But I see that the Father loved us also before, not only before the Son died for us, but before he created the world."[1]

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[1] *Each in his Own Tongue*, by William Herbert Carruth.

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[1] Quoted from Augustine by Calvin in the *Institutes*, Bk. II. ch. xvi.

The point to be observed here is that in relation to the work of salvation the love of God is made original, primary, and determining — even though we must add that in the view of Augustine and Calvin this electing love was limited and partial. In his grace God originates the ways and means of satisfying his righteousness. In his love he determines how he will have his justice to be satisfied. Now how could he do this "unless," as Augustine says, "he were already appeased"? We have then, on this penal theory, this curious paralogism: If God had not been already appeased (at least toward the elect) before Christ died to appease him, he could never even have conceived the plan by which he was appeased. The theory insists that God was propitiated by Christ's death, but is compelled to admit that unless he had been eternally propitious in feeling toward mankind (or, in the Calvinistic view, toward the elected) he could never have adopted the measures by which he was propitiated. Waiving all questions of consistency here, and without raising ethical difficulties, is it not clear that, even in the penal theory, God is the object of the alleged satisfaction afforded him in Christ's death only after he is the subject and author of it; that God satisfies himself by originating and executing a plan of grace for sinners; that, in the last analysis, the satisfaction of God is a satisfaction, not *ab extra*, but *ab intra?* Back of all satisfaction which is supposed to remove the obstacle to the operation of grace lies the fact which, if propitiation be needed, is alone competent to originate it, or make it possible, namely, that, even while we were yet sinners, God *confirmed a love which he already cherished for us* in the fact that Christ died for us (Rom. v. 8). That God should give the supreme proof of his love in providing an appeasement of his justice which, *ex hypothesi*, is an insuperable obstacle to the exercise of his grace, may be to some minds a clear and illuminating conception; but I am compelled to confess that to me it is singularly opaque. I can only say of it what Boso said in reply to one of Anselm's questions: "Verba ista cogitare et dicere possum; sed sensum eorum ita cogitare nequeo, sicut falsitatem non possum intelligere veritatem esse."[1] The only consideration which I am here urging is that, on the penal theory's own showing, the so-called "objective" propitiation has its only possible basis and ground of existence in a "subjective" propitiation whereby "before Christ died for us God was already appeased."[2]

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[1] *On the Trinity*, Bk. XIII. ch. xi. *Cf.* pp. 139, 140.

If it is difficult for the penal theory to carry out consistently the idea that God was the object of a satisfaction accomplished by the sufferings and death of Christ, it is for the vice-penal theories quite impossible. These theories hold that it was necessary, in the interest of God's law or his holiness, that, while manifesting his grace to sinners, he should also assert and vindicate his righteousness at the same time. He must show himself just, while justifying the ungodly. He must maintain his self-respect in providing forgiveness so that he may not seem lax or lenient in his treatment of sin. These theories further hold that, in some way which is not made very clear, Christ's death afforded such a vindication of holiness as was necessary. His sufferings were substituted for men's punishment and sufficed the same end, namely, to assert God's holy displeasure at sin; but they were not of the same kind with punishment — they were not strictly penal, nor did Christ endure the wrath of God. Now the question which I raise here is this: Is not the satisfaction of God, as thus conceived, really a satisfaction by revelation or self-expression? If you say: In order to be satisfied, God must reveal his righteousness as well as his grace, is not this satisfaction as subjective in respect to the righteousness as it is in respect to the grace? God is satisfied, on this theory, by what he himself does, not by anything done to him. He is satisfied by revealing his total nature and by accomplishing man's salvation in accord with the demands of that nature. I submit that this is not properly described as a satisfaction, wrought by another, of which God is the object.

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[1] *Cur Deus Homo*, I. 19.

[2] Dr. James Morison illustrates well the difficulty of carrying out the idea of propitiation. He declares that since the appeasement of his justice in the death of Christ "God is now willing and ready and eager to forgive." But was he then, before that event, *unwilling?* The answer is that his previous state of mind was that of "a desire to be willing to forgive." *Exposition of Romans Third*, p. 305. We have, then, this extraordinary procedure: God "devises a scheme of propitiation" by which his *desire to be willing* to forgive is transformed into an *actual willingness*. I must leave to experts in psychology the question, whether when one desires to be willing to do a thing, he is *willing* or *unwilling* to do it. Compare the words of the Psalmist which Dr. Tymms aptly quotes in his comments on Dr. Morison's explanation: "Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul, for thou art good and *ready to forgive*" (lxxxvi. 5). According to the penal theology he ought to have said, "for thou art good and desirest to be willing to forgive." *Cf.* Tymms, *The Christian Idea of Atonement*, p. 225 *sq.*

The formal principle of these theories, that in the work of salvation God must show himself hostile to sin, as well as gracious to sinners, all theories admit and maintain. It is, indeed, a truism. It is inconceivable that God should undertake the salvation of men at all if sin were not heinous and hateful to him; there would be no motive to salvation if God approved sin or was indifferent to it. The very idea of salvation implies his hatred of sin. But when the effort is made to deduce from this principle the conclusion that, in his saving work, Christ was experiencing something analogous to punishment, considerable difficulties beset the argument. If it is said that Christ confesses the heinousness of sin on man's behalf, or that he performs some act of homage to the divine righteousness, or experiences the effects of sin in his own sinless person and thus reveals its hatefulness — all this would be but a concomitant revelation of the evil of sin accompanying the effort to save men from it. It is not a propitiation or placation of God's wrath viewed as an obstacle to forgiveness, but a revelation or acknowledgment of his displeasure at sin and of its ill desert in the very act of providing salvation from it. The rectoral theories from Grotius onward seem to me to provide for a subjective satisfaction only — a satisfaction of God's righteousness by a revelation of it in the work of Christ. That this revelation, however, was a substitute for man's punishment or that any such substitute was necessary, is a presupposition which was carried over from the penal theory and one under which the theories in question can place no logical foundation. Hence it is natural that the penal suffering of Christ is usually described in these theories as penal, "as it were," and that the objective satisfaction which they assert is objective, "so to speak." The conclusion of the whole matter, to my mind, is this: Desert the strict penal equivalence theory of atonement, and you logically end in the moral theory.

I trust it will be apparent from the preceding remarks that I repudiate the ideas of a propitiation or placation of God's wrath in the sufferings of Christ, the removal of hindrances to forgiveness by his sufferings, the substitution of his death for the penalty of sin, and the accomplishment of an "objective" satisfaction of any kind wrought upon him *ab extra*. I hold, on the contrary, that God was satisfied in the work of Christ because in and through that work he accomplished the ends of his holy love in salvation. The saving work of Christ satisfied not one attribute of God by acting upon it from without, but his total nature by revealing it and realizing in humanity its gracious and holy requirements. The atonement is "objective" if by that is meant that Christ is the Revealer and Mediator of a divine work of holy love which grieves and suffers on account of sin and yearns to save men from it. He is the Representative of God who does for us what we could not do for ourselves. In him we see the life of God illustrated; through him we know God as our Father and are brought to the knowledge of ourselves as his children.

CHAPTER X

ETERNAL ATONEMENT

If God is essentially and eternally love, and if he has been saving men throughout the whole history of our race, then there must be some real sense in which he has ever been reconciling the world unto himself. If atonement is an activity of the divine love in relation to human sin, a self-satisfaction of God in the rescue of sinners, a triumph of love in forgiveness, then God must have been atoning for human sin during the whole history of mankind. We have seen that it is impossible to limit God's provision and activity for man's salvation to one single historic transaction without logically excluding from salvation all who lived before its occurrence. But this would be a conclusion as unbiblical as it is revolting to all enlightened ideas of the divine character. We must therefore conclude that the word "atonement" represents a process and not merely a single event — that it designates the operation in history of certain laws or forces of the divine life which are perpetually operative, an action of God in relation to sin and salvation which has been continuous throughout human history.

This idea of eternal atonement has not received at the hands of theologians the attention which its importance deserves. Indeed, the older treatises on the subject rarely, if ever, allude to such an idea. They prevailingly conceive and represent atonement in a purely transactional sense, frequently limiting the import of the term to one single event — the death of Jesus on the cross. A number of recent writers, however, of various schools and tendencies, have expressed the conviction that the saving work of Christ cannot be thus narrowly conceived without entailing the most intolerable conclusions. They have seen that if the historic work of the Saviour is a revelation of the nature of God, it must represent ways and means of his activity which are perpetual. It is quite impossible to suppose that God's moral nature was for many centuries quiescent, or that some attributes or modes of action held sway down to a certain date and that then others came into play. In short, if the word "atonement" designates any act, process, or method of God which is necessary to salvation at all, the very fact that God has always been saving men proves that it is a continuous and perpetual affair and not a single transaction or event.

The idea of atonement under consideration is not necessarily, and has not in fact been, identified with any particular theory of redemption, though we shall have occasion to see that it is distinctly unfavorable to certain theories, if, indeed, it could be adjusted to them at all. It implies, as will appear directly, some approximation to the Patripassian "heresy" and is not at all germane to the idea of a propitiation of God *ab extra*. It is doubtless due to circumstances like these that it finds little or no recognition in the older theories ; I do not recall so much as an allusion to it in any exposition of the penal theory ; in principle it is probably quite as alien to the rectoral theory, strictly construed, as to the theory of vicarious punishment. Its occasional recognition by advocates of these theories may probably be taken as indicating, either that they have modified the views with which their names are commonly associated, or that they have fallen into an inconsistency of which they are not aware.

It may be useful, at this point, to illustrate the idea in question by a few citations from writers of somewhat varying views. It finds forceful expression in President Strong's later utterances on the subject of atonement. Speaking of the objection which the transactional view raises to the theory under consideration, namely, that, according to the latter, "Christ's atonement has not ceased, his sacrifice is perpetual, and so long as sin exists Christ must suffer," Dr. Strong replies : "I accept all the consequences, and I affirm that the Scripture gives me warrant for so doing. A God of love and holiness must be a God of suffering just so certainly as there is sin." "I need a present atonement as much as the patriarchs did." It is true, continues the author, that "the idea of Christ suffering in and with the whole sinning and groaning creation, bearing sorrow on account of wicked men," is foreign to immature Christian thought, but "it is none the less rational and scriptural."[1] Again he declares that by virtue of the natural and essential relation of Christ to mankind, "it is impossible that he should *not* suffer, that he should *not* make reparation, that he should *not* atone. The incarnation and death of Christ are only the outward and temporal exhibition of an eternal fact in the being of God and of a suffering for sin endured by the preincarnate Son of God ever since the fall. The patriarchs and prophets were saved, not so much by the retroactive effect of a future atonement, as by the present effect of an atonement which was even then in progress. The historical atonement is the objectification of the eternal suffering love of God."[2] It will be observed that these views of Dr. Strong presuppose or involve (1) the eternal, personal preexistence of Christ, (2) his natural headship in relation to humanity, (3) the perpetuity of his suffering for sin — or, as Dr. Strong would say, of his endurance of God's wrath — and (4) the capacity of God to suffer. There is room for wide differences of opinion regarding these points of doctrine which he associates with the theory under review. In the judgment of many the theory would not necessarily involve these accompanying conceptions. The only point that is relevant to the present inquiry is that Dr. Strong here asserts the fact of eternal atonement and grounds it in the passibility of God.

Starting with quite a different conception of the nature and import of Christ's sufferings from that of Dr. Strong, Principal A. M. Fairbairn has developed the view that the incarnation "is to us the externalization of what was innermost in God, the secret of the Eternal manifested in time." "Sin was, as it were, the sorrow in the heart of his happiness. Theology has no falser idea than that of the impassibility of God. If he is capable of sorrow, he is capable of suffering; and were he without the capacity for either, he would be without any feeling of the evil of sin or the misery of man. But to be passible is to be capable of sacrifice; and in the presence of sin the capability could not but become the reality. The being of evil in the universe was to God's moral nature an offence and a pain, and through his pity the misery of man became his sorrow. We may, then, construe the sufferings and death of Christ as if they were the sacraments, or symbols and seals, of the invisible passion and sacrifice of the Godhead."[1] Dr. Fairbairn denies, however, what Dr. Strong asserts, that the sufferings of Christ had a "penal character," and maintains that they express to us that satisfaction which God makes of his entire ethical nature — righteousness and love alike — by revealing his character in self-sacrifice and by recovering the sinner from sin to holiness.

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[1] Article on "Ethical Monism" in *The Examiner* for October 31, 1895.

[2] *The Examiner*, November 15, 1894.

The idea of eternal atonement, as opposed to the transactional conception, underlies Dr. Bushnell's theory of vicarious sacrifice as a fact of universal validity and application. He holds that there is "a cross in God's perfections from eternity." "The whole Deity is in vicarious sacrifice — in it from eternity and will to eternity be. We are not to conceive that our blessed Saviour is some other and better kind of Deity, a God composing and satisfying God; but that all there is in him expresses God, even as he is, and has been of old — such a being in his love that he must needs take our evils on his feeling, and bear the burden of our sin. Nay, there is a cross in God before the wood is seen upon Calvary; hid in God's own virtue itself, struggling on heavily in burdened feeling through all the previous ages, and struggling as heavily now even in the throne of the worlds."[2]

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[1] *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology*, pp. 483–485, *passim*.

[2] *Vicarious Sacrifice*, p. 73 (ed. of 1866).

Dr. Clarke maintains the same view, on the same grounds. Speaking of the satisfaction of God in the work of Christ, he declares: "There is no question here of satisfying law or punitive justice. But there is a question of satisfying God himself, the same God who is ever bearing sin that he may save sinners. Such a God could not be satisfied without opening his heart to those whose sin he was bearing. God is eternally satisfied with the suffering of love for sinners, and desires that it may take the place of all other suffering for sin. In reality, God was doing and bearing, in his own heart, all that was necessary on the divine side to the saving of the sinful. If we choose to apply the word 'atonement,' eternal atonement was made, and is made, in the heart of God. God's own sin-bearing satisfies God, and his exhibition of it in Christ completes his satisfaction."[1]

Before passing on to consider its grounds and implications, I will adduce one other example of this mode of thought. In a striking sermon, entitled *Eternal Atonement*, Dr. Roswell D. Hitchcock raises the question as to the meaning and nature of the biblical saying, "God is love." He answers that it is the best summary of God's moral character, that love is the root of all his moral attributes and activities. Love explains creation, as well as redemption. But what must be the feeling and action of a God of love toward sin? Dr. Hitchcock answers: "God feels it, and has always felt it. Absalom has broken his father's heart; and we are Absalom. The grand old king goes up over Olivet weeping, with his head covered and his feet bare; and that king is God. Only he is the King eternal, and his agony over sin is also eternal. This agony of God over human sin is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. God himself atones, to himself atones; and so atonement is both eternal and divine."[2]

It will have been observed that in several instances the advocates of the idea of eternal atonement have affirmed, or plainly implied, that it is a scriptural conception; let us now inquire on what grounds this contention rests. The question here is not, of course, whether such a generalization was elaborated during the first age in the form in which modern thought conceives it, but whether we meet in the New Testament the elements of which it is composed. To me it seems clear that the earliest speculative thought is found to be moving in this direction. Take, for example, Paul's idea of the cosmic Christ. To his mind Christ is present and operative in the world from the beginning; he has been active in the enlightenment and guidance of the human race throughout its whole history. The spiritual rock of which Israel drank was Christ (1 Cor. x. 4); the same power of God unto salvation which afterward appeared in human form was present in Israel, and if in Israel, why not elsewhere, since God is not the God of the Jews only? Again, if "Christ" designates for Paul the agent or power operative in creation itself, and if God has revealed himself, in various ways and degrees, throughout the whole history of the world, must it not follow that there have been a presence and activity of Christ in the world from the beginning, and if an activity, surely a saving activity? For Paul "Christ" means not merely the historic person whom we call by that name, but the principle (*ἀρχή*) of the creation (Col. i. 15–18) and the medium of a world-wide reconciliation (Col. i. 19, 20).

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[1] *Outline of Christian Theology*, pp. 348, 349.

[2] *Eternal Atonement*, p. 11.

For the writer to the Hebrews Christ's is an eternal priesthood, an office independent of time, a function which is not conditioned upon descent or appointment, but is exercised through the power of an indissoluble life. The most striking peculiarity of this author is his interpretation of the historic work of Christ *sub specie æternitatis*. The word "Christ" is not to him merely a name for a historical character, but a designation of an eternal Power behind the world and above time, through which God has been active in human life from the beginning. And as Christ's is an eternal priesthood, so is it perpetual. Christ ministers now and always in the upper, heavenly temple on man's behalf as truly as he ministered for us while here on earth. With all his emphasis upon the earthly life of Jesus, this author translates all the specific and historical deeds and experiences of Jesus into universal terms. The transactional is grounded in the eternal and reveals and illustrates it. Behind the temporal acts and services of Christ for men lie the heavenly realities. In the blood of the sacrifice made on the cross we discern the offering of himself unto God by virtue of "an eternal spirit" of sacrificial love. Above the temporal sanctuary in which he intercedes for us on earth rises the heavenly temple where "he ever liveth to make intercession."

An analogous circle of ideas — formally different but essentially similar — meets us in the Johannine writings. There we are taught that God is love and that the activities of this love are in perpetual operation. For this type of thought, also, Christ is the medium or principle of love's action. He is the divine Word, God's mode of self-revelation in illuminating and saving the world. He is the light of men universally — the light which lighteth every individual man (Jn. i. 4, 9). Israel was "his own possession" by virtue of his presence in the life of the nation, and among the heathen also there were scattered children of God whom he would gather into his flock (Jn. xi. 52). Christ the Revealer of God and Saviour of men does not begin to be at Bethlehem, and does not begin to work for men in Galilee and Judea. The self-revealing principle in God which at length came to fullest expression in the life of Jesus Christ is an essential factor of the divine essence. This divine, eternal Word enlightens every man and is the inspiring principle of all religion and all goodness. "His writing is upon the wall, whether of the Indian fane or of the porticoes of Greece. All that is good, all that is true, all that is beautiful, comes from him."[1]

Now the one point which I am at present concerned to illustrate is this: Behind the historic Jesus and his earthly mission early Christian thinkers saw a perpetual revealing and saving activity of God; in the transactional they saw the eternal; they sought to translate the particular acts and experiences of Christ into terms of universal divine law and action; in the historic Christ they recognized the cosmic and eternal Christ.

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[1] J. H. Newman, *The Idea of a University*, pp. 65, 66.

Now I am well aware that these references to apostolic Christology raise many important and difficult questions as to the way in which the passages referred to should be interpreted and estimated. It would carry us far beyond our present purpose to discuss these questions. Is this personification of the preëxistent Christ to be taken strictly or rhetorically? Is the eternal Christ of Paul or John a person or a principle? Is the New Testament doctrine of preëxistence a metaphysical theorem or a religious estimate? These are questions which have been quite too easily settled in traditional theology, with little or no consideration or knowledge of the import and history of the preëxistence idea in the religious thought of Palestinian and Alexandrian Judaism. The texts in question have long been subject to dogmatic treatment; now at length the historical method has begun to be applied to them. But whatever the issue on the Christological questions involved, our result is secure. There is an activity of God in all history of which Christ's earthly work is a historical expression. His saving mission is a transactional expression of eternal atonement.

There is another class of biblical representations which, while formally different from those which we have just reviewed, seems to me to illustrate the same fundamental principle; I refer to the teaching concerning the intercession of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. In the Fourth Gospel the intercession of Christ appears as a part of his ministry on earth; yet it looks far beyond that ministry into the future and contemplates a work of grace greater than the present. The earthly ministry of Jesus is regarded as but a beginning; it is to be carried forward perpetually by the operation of the Spirit. Jesus himself will come to his own in greater power than ever and, guided and inspired by a divine Presence, they will do greater works than he had done while on earth. In a word, there is to be a continuous work of Christ in the world of which his saving mission on earth constituted but the beginning. Now this work is ascribed to his promised presence, or coming, now to the gift and guidance of the Spirit. But, in any case, it is a continuation of his earthly life and labor; it is done in his name, that is, on the lines of his historic life-work.

What we have here, then, is a vision of a saving activity of which Christ's earthly labors and experiences were but a part. What he has been doing for men on earth is to be carried forward continually. Men are to be led more deeply into the truth, that is, into the realization of that oneness with God in which he lived — into the fellowship of those sufferings which express the law of the divine life. Whatever be the metaphysics of the doctrine of the Spirit, its religious meaning is, that Christ's work is not a finished, but a continuous work, and that Christ did on earth, under the forms of human experience, only what, in principle, the Father is ever doing.

In other passages the continued work of Christ, or of the Spirit of Christ, is represented under the figure of a mediation or advocacy at law. As Christ was an Advocate before God with reference to our sins (1 Jn. ii. 1), so the Spirit is another Advocate. In the upper, abiding sanctuary Christ perpetually intercedes for our salvation (Heb. vii. 25). In Paul it is the Spirit who makes intercession for the saints with unutterable groanings (Rom. viii. 26, 27). What are these but forms of thought, taken from priestly mediation, or from legal advocacy, to express the truth that the divine agencies employed for our salvation in the historic work of Christ are still and ever operative — that God is always doing what he did in a special manner in the life-work of Jesus — an illustration of the generic idea of eternal atonement?

It can hardly be necessary to insist that such a conception as that of the intercession is obviously figurative. It is a realistic mode of representation — probably suggested by the Jewish priesthood — of the continuousness of that saving activity which is illustrated in the life-work of Jesus. The Christ of history is the Christ of to-day and of all days. The life and work of the Saviour on earth represent the laws and ends of God's perpetual working. This is realistically expressed by saying that Christ intercedes for us. The Spirit of Christ yearns over us in deep and eager interest. Christ perpetually comes to us, dwells in us, works for us. Is not the religious kernel of such ideas this, that the purpose of Christ's life on earth for us discloses the constant purpose and perpetual operation of God in our salvation? Whatever else they may mean, the forms of thought which we have been considering illustrate the truth that the saving work of God is not so much a single fact as a constant method of divine action, and that the earthly life and suffering of Christ are the historic form of an eternal reality, a perpetual process. Can we form any conception of that reality? Can we frame any intelligible idea of that process?

To me the words "eternal atonement" denote the dateless passion of God on account of sin; they mean that God is, by his very nature, a sin-bearer — that sin grieves and wounds his heart, and that he sorrows and suffers in consequence of it. It results from the divine love — alike from its holiness and from its sympathy — that "in all our affliction he is afflicted" (Isa. lxiii. 9). Atonement on its "Godward side" is a name for the grief and pain inflicted by sin upon the paternal heart of God. Of this divine sorrow for sin the afflictions of Christ are a revelation. In the bitter grief and anguish which he experienced on account of sin, we see reflected the pain and sorrow which sin brings to the divine love. Thus Christ's work is grounded in an eternal fact — the sin-bearing and suffering of God. In whatever sense Christ was the Representative of God so that in him men see the Father, in whatever degree he was the interpreter and example of the divine feeling toward sin, in that sense and degree his suffering with and for men in their sins has its ground in the vicarious suffering of the eternal Love.

Of course, this conception of eternal atonement implies the passibility of God. Technically this is, indeed, a heresy, but it is noticeable that it is one which orthodoxy itself has not been able to escape in case it ventured to advance beyond the heathen notion of an appeasement of God *ab extra.* If it is said: Christ is God, or one of the three persons who together compose God, then how can the conclusion, that God suffers in consequence of sin, be avoided? To say that Christ suffered in his human nature but not in his divine nature, would involve a dismemberment of his personality which would ill agree with the traditional definitions of the unity of his person. Accordingly we find that some of the most orthodox theologians — the most uncompromising champions of penal satisfaction even — have virtually admitted the passibility of God, when they have thought their problem through beyond the preposterous idea of an appeasement of God from without. Dr. Shedd, for example, arrives at the conclusion that God himself suffered the penalty of sin — that God punished himself in the person of his eternal Son. However paradoxical this may appear, it is worth noting that, formally considered, it has a point of contact with the conception of eternal atonement. Both affirm a suffering of God in consequence of sin, Dr. Shedd ascribing to that suffering a penal character — a punishment of God! — while modern theology views it as the suffering which arises from paternal love. There is "a judicial infliction," writes Dr. Shedd, "of God's own providing and of his own enduring in the person of his Son." He "conciliates his own holy justice toward the guilty." "The propitiation is no oblation *ab extra*, no device of a third party, or even of man himself to render God placable toward man. It is wholly *ab intra*, a *self*-oblation upon the part of Deity itself, by which to satisfy those immanent and eternal imperatives of the divine nature which without it must find their satisfaction in the punishment of the transgressor, or else be outraged."[1] In this view, God suffers what man deserved to suffer; God punishes himself instead of punishing man, and thus satisfies justice out of his own pangs, "himself the judge, himself the priest, himself the sacrifice." I am only concerned here with the single point that the most ultra orthodoxy is driven, in the last analysis, to the conclusion that God can only be appeased in the sense of appeasing himself by self-sacrifice — that he can only satisfy his appetite for punishment by himself enduring it. Dr. Shedd himself evidently feels the difficulty connected with the idea of a self-punishment of God. He calls this method of substituting God for man in punishment an "extraordinary method," and admits that the conception that divine justice demanded for its satisfaction the crucifixion of one of the persons of the eternal Trinity, requires for its acceptance the most heroic "will to believe." "It is," says Dr. Shedd, "so strange and stupendous, that it requires very high testimony and proof to make it credible." [1]

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[1] *Theological Essays*, pp. 266, 272.

Dr. Bushnell very naturally discovered a point of contact between his own conclusions and those of Dr. Shedd.[2] For both "propitiation" was self-propitiation ; God satisfied himself in self-sacrifice. It may be doubted whether Dr. Bushnell's efforts, in his later years, to elaborate and apply this idea are much more satisfactory than those of Dr. Shedd ; but, in any case, they illustrate how thinkers, the most diverse in tendency, were driven back upon a subjectivity lying behind objectivity in atonement, and how both alike, though in different ways, made use of the idea of a suffering of God on account of sin. Dr. Bushnell's explanation of God's self-propitiation has never been regarded as very clear or satisfying. In attempting to approximate to orthodoxy by asserting not only a reconciliation of men to God, but of God to men, he asserts that the bestowment of forgiveness must always be accompanied in the person providing the forgiveness, by a making cost to himself in suffering, expense, or painstaking sacrifice or labor.[3] Forgiveness is possible "only by the help of some placation or cost-making sacrifice."

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[1] *Dogmatic Theology*, II. 447.

[2] *Forgiveness and Law*, p. 58.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 40.

"Suffering is with all moral natures the necessary correlate of forgiveness." Hence in providing forgiveness God "must atone himself into the gentleness and patience of love." This self-atonement by cost or suffering is propitiation. But it proceeds entirely from God's love, and "is only designed to work on other unreducible sentiments that hinder his love, in forgiveness it might otherwise bestow."[1] Dr. Bushnell seems in these passages to be approximating the governmental theory, though he relates the alleged propitiation, not to God's law, but to certain "unreducible sentiments" which obstruct the operation of his love. What these were and how the death of Christ availed to allay them, he was not very successful in showing. But it is noticeable that the attempt proceeded upon the ideas underlying eternal atonement. "There is," he says, "no such thing as date in God's dispositions" (p. 59). "The transactional matter of Christ's life and death is a specimen chapter, so to speak, of the infinite book that records the eternal going on of God's blessed nature within" (p. 60). God is by his nature a sufferer for sin, and that suffering is not momentary, but dateless and perpetual.

The idea of a sin-bearing passion of God, which is coeval with the fact of sin, implies that love in God and in man is essentially the same. It is the very nature of love to give, to serve, and to suffer with and for its objects. Love is the great burden-bearer, and when those toward whom it is exercised are in misfortune and misery, that burden becomes a burden of pain and grief. If this is not the nature of the divine love, then that love is absolutely different in kind from anything that the human heart has ever known, is utterly unintelligible to us, and is neither reflected nor interpreted in the love of human experience. But such a conclusion would be utterly intolerable. It *is* a love kindred to our own — only immeasurably profounder — which we see illustrated in the holy mystery of Christ's cross and passion. If Christ lived a life of service, giving himself without stint to bless and save men, it is because it is really Godlike so to do; if he lived a life of vicarious sympathy and suffering, bearing men's griefs and carrying their sorrows, it is because there is a great compassion, of which all human tenderness is but a faint reflection, in the heart of the Eternal; if Christ gave his life in utmost sacrifice for men, it is because there is in the being of God himself the possibility of vicarious suffering which, so far from marring his blessedness, is one of the elements of that matchless perfection whose name is love.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 48, 49, 54.

If, now, we may regard as established a conclusion in which thinkers of such varying tendencies agree, namely, that there is a suffering of God on account of sin, what character and significance shall we assign to it? The mystical theory answers by identifying Christ with God on the one side and with man on the other. Christ is at once God and the natural "root" of humanity. His relation to mankind is said to be analogous to the relation of the head to the other members of the body. Now when men suffer for sin, he also suffers with them in their suffering. This is a passion of God, since Christ is God, and it is a suffering for sin which is felt wherever sin is. The suffering of Christ on earth is but a historic example of it. But it is held to be a penal endurance of the consequences of sin by mankind in the person of its head or representative. This, if I understand it well enough to state it correctly in my own words, is the theory which Dr. Strong has expounded in his later writings.[1] I will not attempt to discuss it. I can form no intelligible conception of its definition of Christ as being at once one of the persons of an eternal Trinity and the "sum" or "root" of humanity. Nor does the illustration drawn from the relation of the various parts of the physical body serve in the least degree to illuminate the subject. But all criticism apart, the scheme reduces to this: God must punish sin; his justice requires that there should be suffering on account of it; this suffering he inflicts upon himself, or upon a part of himself (Christ); but inasmuch as Christ is also the sum of humanity, it is therefore inflicted upon man who deserves it. The twofold use of "Christ," in this theory, as now equivalent to God and now to humanity, reminds one of Anselm's argument: *As God* Christ *can* pay the debt; *as man* he *is obligated* to pay it. Those who may understand this metaphysical mysticism better than I can profess to do, may be better satisfied with it. It seems to me, however, to solve the problem to which it addresses itself only formally; in that respect also it closely resembles Anselm's theory. If I may so express it, Dr. Strong seems to me to explain the relatively unknown by the absolutely unknown. The explanation is tenfold more mysterious than the problem. It resembles many expositions of the Apocalypse which are far more incomprehensible than the book itself. Instead of interpreting the work of Christ on the analogy of the nature and action of love as known in human life, it constructs forthwith an incomprehensible definition of Christ in the interest of the maxim that God must and does punish all sin. Christ can be punished because he is humanity; but he is also God. Can he be punished as such? God can suffer; can he suffer penally? Can God punish himself for his own satisfaction?

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[1] *Christ in Creation, passim.*

The question which we have just raised Dr. Shedd, as we have seen, answers affirmatively. God himself, in the person of his eternal Son, is the victim of the divine vengeance upon sin. God must punish, and his grace is seen in the fact that he does not punish the guilty, but punishes himself instead. I have not observed that Dr. Strong follows his own logic quite so far. His two-sided definition of Christ enables him to speak of the Christ who is the sum of humanity when punishment is in question, and from this point of view the Christ who is God is in abeyance. But Dr. Shedd knows nothing of this double Christ who is humanity for human purposes and God for divine purposes. Hence for him the principle of an *ab intra* satisfaction, coupled with the maxim: "God must punish," leads straight to the conclusion: God punishes himself, or, more realistically expressed: the divine justice required as a satisfaction for sin the crucifixion of one of the persons of the eternal Trinity.

Such is the conclusion to which the most logical modern advocate of vicarious punishment with whom I am acquainted is driven by his premisses: God must punish all sin, and: If he does not punish man, he must punish himself. The divine suffering on account of sin is, then, retributive, vindicatory. God avenges himself on himself; in his mercy he determines to satisfy his penal righteousness by expending his wrath upon himself. Certainly no one will dispute Dr. Shedd's assertion that it requires a heroic faith to believe this. I should say that it would require a capacity for belief to which all things are possible — including the acceptance of the self-contradictory. I shall not argue against this conclusion. Those who have followed the argument of this book with the slightest sympathy would properly regard any effort to refute it as gratuitous; those who could accept it — if such there be — I should expect to find impervious to argument. A self-punishment of God! This is the *reductio ad absurdum* of penal satisfactionism.

The suffering of God on account of sin is not penal; it is not a special pain inflicted by the Almighty upon himself in order to satisfy his retributive justice; it is not a device for overcoming his "unreducible sentiments," or a method of removing obstacles to forgiveness. The passion of God on account of sin arises from the very nature of holy love in the presence of that moral evil which corrupts and destroys the objects of that love. God does not suffer what man deserved to suffer in order that man may escape suffering; he suffers the affront which sin offers to love — the pain which sin inflicts upon his heart. This suffering does not enable God to be gracious; he is gracious already and always. It is not a single event, but a perpetual fact. It evinces and illustrates the holiness of God and the evil of sin as nothing else could do, but not as a substituted retribution. Which reveals the more forcibly the evil of a wicked son's life, — the penalties which the father in his indignation seeks to visit upon him, or the sympathetic sorrow which breaks the father's heart? How does it the more clearly appear that the father is a righteous man — by his fixed determination to punish either his son or himself, or by the agony of his moral nature over the sin which is ruining an object of his love?

Eternal atonement is not a condition precedent of God's saving sinners, but an aspect of the love that is ever yearning and seeking to save them. The moment it is admitted that atonement is a name, not for a single event which took place on a certain day centuries ago, but for a dateless and perpetual fact conterminous with sin, that moment it becomes apparent that righteousness and benevolence are always in union and coöperation in salvation — that they do not rival, checkmate, or hinder one another, but that toward sinners God is and ever has been at once gracious and holy — ever ready to forgive, but never ready except on the terms which holiness prescribes. The very idea of forgiveness implies inviolable holiness, since it involves the testing and condemnation of evil by the standard of absolute rectitude. An unholy being thinks lightly of sin and condones it because indifferent to it; but a forgiving God is one who repudiates the evil. Nothing speaks more loudly of the heinousness of sin than forgiveness. *Only a holy God can forgive.* Only a holy God can suffer for sin. Would you see what sin is and what holiness is? Behold the sorrow which sin brings to the heart of God, and the judgment which the very fact of forgiving love passes upon it! Sin is nowhere so condemned as in the suffering of holy love in consequence of it and at the bar of God where it is confessed and forgiven.[1]

Eternal atonement means that God is ever the same and deals with mankind at all times according to the same principles and laws. His laws are the uniform methods of his action; his attributes are the changeless perfections of his character. To suppose that at some particular time he does something, either to himself or to some one else, which enables him thereafter to act differently from what he otherwise could have done; to represent him as doing something to satisfy one attribute so that it may no longer impede the action of another; to imagine that one day he completed a provision for man's salvation — such notions are the crudest anthropomorphisms. I submit that it is more rational to suppose that the nature and action of God are in principle ever the same; that if he is now willing to save men, he always has been willing; that if he is actually saving men to-day, he has ever been saving them through the operation of the same holy love; that if Christ revealed God in his sympathetic, suffering, and saving love, he revealed him as he was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be.

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[1] "Condemnation is not only a prerequisite of forgiveness, but is actually implied, and inevitably contained in the very act of forgiveness itself, for this act has no relation to what is blameless." Tymms, *The Christian Idea of Atonement*, p. 50.

Such are some of the consequences of viewing the action of God in respect to sin and salvation *sub specie æternitatis.* God performs no enabling acts; he does nothing for ulterior ends; he makes no exhibits of severity to prevent giving a wrong impression; he acts out his moral nature, which is consistent, holy love. What he does is grounded in what he is. His historic revelations are transcripts of eternal fact. His mercy is from everlasting. His attitude toward mankind has never changed. His relation to sinners is the same in all ages. Always and everywhere he condemns sin not chiefly by *fiat* or decree, but by suffering the wound which it inflicts. Always and everywhere he maintains his righteousness, while revealing his grace, in forgiveness. The verdict of eternal holiness on sin is this, that it can never be forgotten, overlooked, or condoned; *it must be repented of, repudiated, and forgiven.*

CHAPTER XI

SALVATION BY UNION WITH CHRIST

We have had occasion already to refer to Paul's formula of justification by faith. We must now inquire more particularly into its significance.[1] The apostle has three principal modes of describing the appropriation of salvation. They are best represented by the phrases: justification by faith, dying and rising with Christ, and being in Christ. These are synonymous, if not perfectly identical, terms — descriptions of the same religious experience. It would therefore be an unfair treatment of Paul's thought to consider any one of them apart from the others, or to construct a doctrine of the Christian life upon inferences derived exclusively from one of these modes of presenting and illustrating the experience of salvation.

The formula of justification is one which Paul derived from his Jewish education. It is frequently employed in the Old Testament and was one of the great topics of the rabbinical schools. Formally considered, "justify" is a legal term and means to declare righteous, to acquit. It is a term derived from the analogies of the law court. It implies that God acts as a judge or sovereign and, upon certain conditions, pronounces men exempt from blame or penalty, proclaiming their acceptance into his favor. In the Pharisaic schools the appropriate condition of such a decree of acceptance was the complete performance of all the religious acts and duties prescribed in the Mosaic law. Where there had been a serious endeavor, a defective obedience might be eked out by the imputation to a person of the supererogatory merits of some pious ancestor. Now this was the theory of religion in which Paul had been trained. It was the theory according to which his own early efforts and struggles after peace with God were conducted. But he had learned its futility. He had found that a deep and sincere moral nature which feels the exceeding sinfulness of sin and clearly sees the lofty character of the divine requirements, could never rest secure in the sense of its own achievements, especially when the chief stress was laid upon ceremonial acts as the primary demand of religion. The time came when this Pharisaic scheme seemed to Paul to be a theory of salvation *by merit*, whereas he saw that sinful men could be saved only *by pure grace*. Hence this former advocate of salvation by legal works became now its uncompromising opponent.

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[1] The relevant passages are reviewed in detail in my *Theology of the New Testament*, pp. 417–430, and I shall here take for granted a general familiarity with the texts.

But there was no occasion to repudiate the word "justify." It was still a good and serviceable word. Paul believed in what it expressed — an acquittal from guilt, an acceptance into God's favor — as firmly as ever. The question now in dispute was not as to the *fact*, but as to the *condition* of justification. For the Pharisee that condition was expressed by the word "works," meaning deeds of obedience to the Mosaic law, contemplated as meriting God's favor; for Paul the condition was faith in Christ. The problem was: How shall sinful man be just with God? The Pharisees answered: By keeping the law; Paul answered: By believing on Christ. The difference lay not so much, if at all, in their different ideas of justification, formally considered, as in their wholly different conceptions of the condition of acceptance with God.

Now our Protestant theology has shown a strong preference for this Pauline maxim of justification by faith as against the Roman Catholic emphasis upon participation in rites and ceremonies considered as conditions of salvation. To the Catholic mind the Protestant view has seemed one-sided because, it is said, it eventuates in the error condemned by James, a faith without works, which is dead. To the Protestant, on the other hand, the Catholic theory of salvation has seemed to be only a Christianized Pharisaism — a doctrine of salvation by ceremonial acts which is in principle the very error against which Paul so energetically contended. It appears to me that in this dispute of Catholic and Protestant with each other and in the treatment by both of the Pauline doctrine, there has been a good deal of misunderstanding, confusion, and irrelevancy. It is a misfortune that the single category of justification which, from being a legal term, so easily gives rise to unwarranted inferences, has been so predominantly employed in discussions of the nature and conditions of salvation.[1] It can only be rightly estimated when it is remembered, (1) that it is not one of the terms of Jesus' teaching, (2) that it is not a prevailing term in the New Testament generally, and (3) that, even in Paul, the occasion for its employment lies in his polemic against Pharisaism.

However well adapted the term "justify" may be to express certain aspects of salvation — the completeness of God's acceptance and forgiveness, for example — it is a term germane to a legalistic mode of theologizing, such as was characteristic of late Judaism. If unobjectionable in itself, it *is* liable to carry associations and to give rise to inferences which ill accord with the Christian conception of salvation. Illustrations of this liability are seen in the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer and in the widespread notion of salvation as dependent upon a passive acquiescence or an intellectual assent. These are deductions from the idea of a forensic acquittal which are as natural as they are unwarranted by Paul's conceptions of the subject. All figures and analogies are liable to perversion and abuse, and Paul is not to be held responsible for those aberrations. But such one-sided applications of his language will best be avoided by seeing that he is wedded to no single term or thought-form, but has a varied and rich vocabulary for describing Christian experience. Much less does the New Testament as a whole employ any single word as a shibboleth. Let us note more particularly how the case stands in regard to the term in question.

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[1] "The relation of the soul to God has been viewed mainly in two ways. The one way is to compare him with light illumining an object. The other way is to view the relation between God and the soul through the analogies of the law court. God is either the judge or the prosecutor or the plaintiff, and the soul is the prisoner at the bar. It is to the legal bent of the mind of Paul that the forensic turn of so much Christian theology is due, and thousands of writers have occupied themselves in rabbinical disquisitions about justification without contributing one new thought either to religion or to law. Theologians have been engaged on the impossible task of reducing all the intimacies which grow out of the relation of the soul to God to a single type. The good citizen moves through life in a well-ordered state without entering the precincts of the law court, at any rate as a criminal. And theologians have treated the whole human race as if it were simply criminal, and nothing more. The same genius for law which built up the Roman code threw itself upon the analogous aspect of the religious life. Even the kingdom of God becomes in the theology of Calvin a huge system of arbitrary police, of which the government of Geneva offered the earthly type." Frank Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, pp. 246, 247.

If it had not been for Paul's controversy with the Judaizers and for the corrective offered to a perversion of his doctrine by the Epistle of James, there is no reason to suppose that we should ever have had the formula, "justification by faith," in theology. Paul employs it only in his polemic against the Judeo-Christian tendency to bind the burdens of legal observance upon the Christian conscience. It was a controversial watchword. When the apostle is expounding his gospel of grace independently and constructively, he employs almost exclusively other terms to describe it, and especially the phrases mentioned, dying with Christ and living in Christ. These facts constitute no objection to the term in question, but they do show that when left to follow the bent of his own mind, the apostle instinctively turned to other modes of thought and expression and described salvation, by preference, in terms drawn from vital processes and personal relations rather than in those derived from forensic analogies. The Epistle of James is evidently concerned to correct an impression to which the doctrine of salvation by faith alone would be peculiarly liable — however unwarrantably — namely, that a mere belief is all that God requires. Hence this Epistle would supplement faith by good works. But the good works which this author recommends are not the "works" to which Paul objects as conditions of salvation. James means by "works" deeds of Christian love and service, while Paul is speaking about acts of obedience to the Mosaic law contemplated as entitling the doer to salvation. Nor do the two writers mean the same thing by "faith." James means by it mere opinion or assent, — a "faith" which devils may have and remain devils still, — while Paul means by it a living union with Christ. If, as some suppose, James was correcting Paul, he was correcting him only after radically misunderstanding him. It is more likely that the statements in James are aimed at a popular, but unwarranted, version of the doctrine of justification by faith only.

Much of the misunderstanding between Catholic and Protestant is of very much the same character as that which obtained in New Testament times. On the one hand, justification, legally considered, seems to be a mere formality; therefore it must be made to mean, *making* righteous, instead of, *declaring* righteous. Again, justification by faith alone seems equivalent to justification by a faith which *is alone.* Hence to say that a man may be justified without "works" is declared to be equivalent to saying that one's religious opinions are the only important thing, that salvation is in no way conditioned on a good life. On the other hand, Protestants often exaggerate the Catholic doctrine by representing the good works on which it lays stress as consisting wholly of ritualistic observances. Now however much the Protestant interpretation of justification may have exposed itself to the criticisms referred to, it is certain that the Pauline doctrine, rightly understood, is utterly opposed to the idea of salvation by opinion, however correct or important.

It must be remembered, first of all, that the word "justify" is an analogical expression, a figure of speech. If this legal figure were translated into its equivalent, forgiveness, many unwarranted inferences from it and many disputes concerning it would be rendered less plausible, if not quite impossible. Further, one must remember what faith is for Paul. The apostle's conception of the nature of faith should have saved his idea of justification from ever seeming to wear the appearance of a mere formality or court process. Faith is a vital union with Christ, a living in Christ, which makes the believer's life a Christ-filled life. Now it is such a fellowship with Christ which is the condition of justification. How, then, can justification, so conditioned, be a mere formal affair? It is to be noted, too, that the form of the Pauline doctrine is not, as the traditional theology has commonly held, the imputation of another's righteousness to the believer, but the imputation of the believer's own faith to him for righteousness. Paul never speaks of God's imputing Christ's righteousness to the believer; he states his doctrine of imputation in three forms of words, all of which are used interchangeably and mean the same: (1) the believer's faith is reckoned to him for righteousness; (2) righteousness is reckoned to him on condition of faith, and (3) his sins, when he accepts Christ, are no longer reckoned to him. The first is by far the most frequent form of statement. The imputation of which Paul speaks is the imputation of faith, and the denial of this fact in traditional dogmatics[1] is due to a misunderstanding of Paul's doctrine of faith. The denial sprang from the feeling that if justification were defined as an imputation of faith, that would mean that salvation was based upon some act of man contemplated as meritorious. But the apostle's favorite formula is open to no such construction, since for him faith is the correlative of grace, and so far from being by any possibility a work of merit, is the renunciation of all claims and merits and the humble acceptance of a gift of grace. Paul's oft-repeated maxim: "Faith is reckoned for righteousness" would not have needed to be set aside if its implications had been correctly understood. It was natural enough, however, since the old Protestant conception of faith was so largely that of an acquiescence or assent, that it should have been supposed that Paul had no profounder idea and that, therefore, the faith of which he spoke was quite unworthy to be reckoned as righteousness.

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[1] *E.g.* in the Westminster Confession, ch. xi.: "not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, etc., as their righteousness, but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ," etc.

The question now arises: Why did Paul deem it feasible that faith should be reckoned for, or as, righteousness? What did he mean by the imputation of faith? Righteousness is acceptance with God. But how can one be accepted with God while sin still cleaves to him? Must not one perform all the divine requirements in order to be just in his sight? Yes, said the Pharisee, and these requirements are found prescribed in the Mosaic books, especially in the ritual law. But, Paul would answer, the highest requirements of God are not ritualistic, but moral. Who dares to claim that he has loved God with all his heart and his neighbor as himself? Salvation by perfect obedience to the law of God, adequately understood, would mean salvation by sinlessness, and if man were sinless, he would not need forgiveness. But man is not sinless but sinful, and so sinful as to be morally powerless to do even the good which he approves and desires to do. It was some such course of thought which brought Paul face to face with his problem and opened the way to its solution. If God saves graciously, he must save us, not after we have first become perfect, but while we are yet sinful; but if he saves righteously, he must save only on conditions which involve our entrance upon the way to righteousness and which guarantee the increasing attainment of righteousness. Both these conditions are met in the doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ. Faith means, not our perfection, but our dependence upon grace; but it also means our union with Christ, and that union with the perfect Life means aspiration after goodness, a fixed preference for holiness, and assures its progressive attainment. In principle, Paul's doctrine of justification is an amplification of the beatitude of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Faith is aspiration, the forward look, the inner vision of the invisible. Faith in Christ is an eager desire to be like him; it is the choice of his ideals, a conviction of the truth and value of his type of life. It is the will to do God's will, as Jesus reveals and interprets it. Justification by faith is God's acceptance of the will for the deed. Salvation is by aspiration, that is, by the choice and preference of the good. God accepts and treats us, not according to what we are, but according to what we would like to be. The measure of the man in the eyes of God is not his performance, but his desire.

> "Not on the vulgar mass
> Called 'work' must sentence pass,
> Things done, that took the eye and had the price;
> O'er which, from level stand,
> The low world laid its hand,
> Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice:
>
> But all, the world's coarse thumb
> And finger failed to plumb,
> So passed in making up the main account;
> All instincts immature,
> All purposes unsure,
> That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount:
>
> Thoughts hardly to be packed
> Into a narrow act,
> Fancies that broke through language and escaped;
> All I could never be,
> All men ignored in me,
> This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped."[1]

The attainment of righteousness in conduct and character is a never ending process. Justification means that God accepts us as righteous when we have entered on the way of righteousness. Nor is this verdict of acceptance a mere fiction; it is the solidest moral reality. Heights of moral achievement do, indeed, lie far beyond us and rise high above us; but if ours is a genuine faith in Christ, we are on the way to their attainment. The goal of Christian growth and effort may be yet far away for the Christian man; but if he has set it distinctly before himself, if he has deliberately chosen it and set his heart upon it, it is by anticipation his; he has "seized it with his eye"; he has grasped it in his purpose, and no matter how far he may be from it to-day, he shall reach it if he presses steadily on. Faith is the clear sight of Christ in his true meaning for our human life; it is to see life and destiny as he saw them, to measure values as he measured them. To see Christ is to see the world and life with something of his clear discernment and just judgment. In such a vision of Christ all possibilities of growth in his likeness are hidden. We can become like him if we can thus see him as he is; never otherwise. Faith is no arbitrary condition of salvation; it is the only conceivable condition of a real attainment of Godlikeness. It is a choice, an aspiration, a yearning for the good and the true, which opens the Kingdom of heaven to men. No spiritual good can be ours until we desire it; nor will any be withheld from us which through appreciation and preference we are capable of receiving.

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[1] Browning, *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, xxiii.–xxv.

When faith is viewed as mere belief, an acceptance of propositions, a holding of things for true, justification does, indeed, have in it a note of unreality. Morally minded men can hardly be made to believe that the issues of eternity are staked on an opinion. It is quite unlikely that any of our theories concerning the mysteries of the spiritual world are correct enough to serve as an adequate warrant of our moral safety and perfection here and hereafter. Or, if faith be viewed as a passive acquiescence in the merit of another, which we hope to have reckoned over to our account, it is not strange that a putative righteousness of this kind should seem arbitrary and unreal. But I do not think that these objections can be justly brought against Paul's doctrine of the imputation of the believer's faith to him for righteousness. It is the conception of the nature of faith which determines the idea of justification. The latter, considered separately, does easily lend itself to formal, *fiat* interpretations. It is this figure of a verdict or pronouncement underlying the word "justify" which has often led theology into a superficial formalism. It remained but to conceive of "faith" as many had already conceived it in New Testament times, in order to arrive at the conceptions against which the Epistle of James inveighs — a mere theoretic assent and a consequent unethical "righteousness."

It is Paul's conception of faith which, if understood, effectually saves his doctrine of justification from all such unreality. It is, indeed, contrasted with "works" in the legal sense attached to that term by Pharisaism, but so far is it from being opposed to works in the sense of good deeds and services flowing from Christian charity, that it gives evidence of its vital power by love (Gal. v. 6). Everywhere faith is inseparably associated with hope and love. It is an active, energizing principle. Dissevered from love, it would seem as inoperative and valueless to Paul as to James. Were it but a belief, however heroic, it would be morally profitless, unless undergirded and inspired by love. "Though I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing" (1 Cor. xiii. 3).

For Paul faith is union with Christ — entrance into fellowship of life with him. Between the believer and Christ there is a mutual indwelling. The man of faith is said to be in Christ, and Christ in him. Again, salvation is described as a dying with Christ on the cross and a rising with him in newness of life. These are simply Paul's favorite forms of describing the experience which in his polemic with the Judaizers he calls justification. They are all terms for expressing the inception and nature of the Christian life. Faith in Christ, union with Christ, dying and rising with Christ — all these are synonymous phrases. And what do they mean? The answers of theologians vary according to their differing theories of salvation. To be in Christ, says the advocate of vicarious punishment, is to take refuge in his substitution — to believe that he has paid our debt, endured our penalty, that we might not endure it; to be in Christ means to be covered with the robe of his righteousness — to have his merit imputed to us; our sins were laid on him and in their stead his righteousness is reckoned to us. To be in Christ is thus to be acquitted and exempted from penalty.

To be in Christ, declares the metaphysical mystic, means exactly what it says. If we are in him, he must somehow include or embrace us. How this is, or can be, is generally explained by the use of illustrations. The New Testament supplies examples. Believers are in Christ as the branches are in the vine; they are related to him as the inferior organs of the body are to the head. Hence we are told that Christ is the head, or root, or sum of humanity. But since we are supposed to be dealing here in exact definition, we must ask: Which of these terms is to be taken as defining the subject in hand? There is a wide difference between the relation of the branches to a trunk and that of the members to the head, and a still wider difference between the "root" of a tree and the "sum" of its parts. Were the biblical descriptions referred to intended as illustrative figures of speech, adapted to convey a practical impression of the supreme significance of Christ for religious faith and life, or as scientifically accurate definitions available for the purposes of a metaphysical theology? If the latter were the case, then we must say that the definitions do not define, for theology is never more impenetrable than when it essays to explain the believer's relation to Christ by a metaphysical application of these figures. They are of the same sort with those "monistic" explanations of our relation to God which assure us that our consciousness is embraced in the all-inclusive consciousness — that our personality must be regarded as "merged," "fused," "absorbed," or "lost" in the Absolute.[1] They are of the same sort because they all have their roots in the same pantheistic philosophy.

I must leave it to others to discuss, explain and understand these physical, quasi-physical, and metaphysical definitions and descriptions of union with Christ. I must content myself with trying to point out some of the meanings which the plain man might be expected to appreciate and to verify in his religious experience. To me the two great mystics of the New Testament, Paul and John, seem to have held very practical views of what union with Christ means. It is worth while to note the connections in which they have set the idea, and then we may inquire how the general result may be summarized.

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[1] See Bradley's *Appearance and Reality*, *passim*.

When, in the Epistle to the Romans, Paul had, in the earlier chapters, refuted the Pharisaic notion of justification by meritorious works and established his own counter-theory, he proceeds to explain what moral results are involved in this verdict of acceptance with God which he has been defending. It seems to some, he says in effect, that my view of the futility of the law and of the way in which it "makes transgressions abound" involves the conclusion that my doctrine implies a light estimate of sin. Far from it! exclaims the apostle; the man who has intrusted himself to Christ as Saviour has thereby broken with his old sinful life as by a death (Rom. vi. 2); he has been buried out of sight of the world in which he once lived and has been raised to a new and glorified life. To be united to Christ is to be severed from that sinful life which Christ repudiated and condemned; it is to forsake the evil world and to enter Christ's world; it is to die unto sin and to live unto God; it is to live under the power of the motives, interests, and ideals which were enthroned in the life of Jesus and which he summarized in the words, "the Kingdom of God and his righteousness." This is what Paul meant by being in Christ.

And this relation to Christ involves the true freedom of the soul. When one becomes a servant of Christ, he becomes a servant of righteousness, and bondage to righteousness is the true freedom of man. The apostle puts this paradox very strikingly. In your old life, he says, you were bond-slaves of sin and regarded yourselves as free from the requirements of righteousness; now you have become the bond-servants of righteousness and have become free from the power of sin (Rom. vi. 20, 22). After a description, in chapter vii., of the terrible conflicts and struggles through which he passed in his search for this freedom and peace, he enters upon a fuller elaboration of its character and consequences in chapter viii. To be in Christ is to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. It is to be animated by the same Spirit of life which was in Christ; it is to be spiritually minded, that is, spiritually alive; it is to possess the mind of Christ — to see the world and life with his eyes and to judge and value all things by his standard. To be in Christ is to possess the Spirit of Christ — to contemplate the world from Christ's point of view — to look out into the future with Christ's calm and confident trust. The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of life and liberty and hope. It triumphs over fear and suffering; it dares to hope and believe that the pain and groaning of the present world shall yet give place to the harmonies of a heavenly order. To be in Christ is to rest secure and unshaken in the sense of God's love. He who is in Christ is persuaded that no experience and no power shall be able to separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus his Lord (Rom. viii. 39).

The later epistles of Paul also are full of this idea of the believer's life in Christ and its implications. In Ephesians the readers are said to have been raised from the moral death of sin to the life of righteousness. This is what it means to be saved by grace through faith. The once spiritually dead now live in Christ; the aliens from the favor and fellowship of God have been gathered into his family. The barriers between Jew and Gentile have been broken down, the alienations created by race prejudice and race hatred overcome. To be in Christ is to have a sense of human brotherhood — to recognize our fellow-men of whatever race or nation as children of a common Father. To be in Christ means to grow like him in personal character — to attain increasingly to the stature of complete manhood which is illustrated in him. It means to take each his place in the organism of society, each serving as a part, however humble, in making up the unity of the body, contributing his part to the building of the temple of Christian fellowship. Life in Christ is no isolated affair ; it is no escape from the duties and responsibilities of life ; it is no mere solitary refuge from personal danger. It is life in the world, life which allies itself with others, and in mutual sympathy and support fronts the evils of the world with the superior might of a corporate morality.

Life in Christ, the apostle goes on to say in effect, is a life of personal purity. It means to "walk in love," which signifies, exactly as in John, to "walk in light" (Eph. v. 2, 8), which, again, as in John, is a figurative designation of "goodness and righteousness and truth" (Eph. v. 9). Finally, a sketch is given of the reciprocal rights and duties of various classes of persons "in the Lord"—husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants. To be in Christ means to realize and to try to fulfil one's obligations in the various natural and social relations in which he is providentially placed.

In Colossians we find a similar exposition of what being in Christ involves. He who has been raised from the moral death of sin with him must enter the world of heavenly truth and reality to which he belongs. He should centre his interest on things spiritual and divine, hiding his life with Christ in God (Col. iii. 3). To be in Christ means to live in Christ's world, to ascend into the heights of his exaltation above the fleeting, changing things of earth and make one's home in the abiding and eternal. But this ascent into heaven does not withdraw one from earth. The apostle does not mean to recommend any transcendental other-worldliness ; he proceeds immediately to describe the concrete errors and sins which the Christian must fight and conquer, and the plain moral duties which belong to the very substance of the Christian life : compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance, forgiveness, and, to crown and complete all, love, the all-inclusive virtue.

If we turn to the Johannine writings, we shall find the same sort of mysticism, in which union with Christ means neither an ecstatic rapture nor a metaphysical absorption, but a moral kinship of life, an *imitatio Christi*, not merely in outward action, but in motive, spirit, and character. The dominant note which is struck in the First Epistle is this, that the Christian man must walk in the light, and "light" is explained to mean love. He must be frank, open, honest; honest, first of all, with himself in acknowledging his faults—then abjuring all bitterness and hatred, loving his fellow-men sincerely. Now love is only another name for holiness; it is pure as the white light by which it is symbolized. The vision of Christ is a vision of holiness. He who believes on him and hopes in him is absolutely committed by that very fact to a righteous life. Every one that has his hope fixed on Christ purifies himself even as he is pure (1 Jn. iii. 3). And this righteousness which union with Christ implies and demands is as plain and practical as it is lofty and ideal. It means love and service to men, careful discrimination between the evil and the good, cessation from sins of deed and disposition, victory over the world. In a word, it means to know God, that is, to live in obedience to him and in fellowship with him, to realize the Godlike life, which *is* salvation. To this life Christ is the pathway. In his company, under his guidance, we enter upon it. In union with him we increasingly realize its meaning and its nature. To join one's self to Christ is to enter upon the path of life; it is to commit one's self to his truths and ideals, to adopt as one's own his motives and principles. To do this is the condition of salvation; or, better, it is the beginning of salvation. Such a choice or self-commitment is the faith by which we are justified. "Can faith save him?" asks James. Yes; if it is that kind of faith—a faith which binds the soul to Christ in sincere preference and aspiration for the life Christ bids men live. No; if by it is meant a passive acquiescence or intellectual assent, a notion, however correct, concerning the essence or policy of God.

Can there be any question, then, why justification should be conditioned upon faith — why salvation should be through union with Christ? Is any other condition reasonable or conceivable? And, yet, when we raise the question, why faith is reckoned for righteousness, theologians divide at once into rival and opposing parties. Because faith *is* righteousness; because it is the germ, or root, or beginning of righteousness; because it is the divinely prescribed condition of obtaining it — such are some of the answers. Some will have it that faith is meritorious; others that it is only excellent, while still others seem to regard it as morally neutral. Here it is an act or choice of man's own; there it is an effect wrought in him by divine grace. For some righteousness is a *status;* for others a relation, and for yet others a character. What a confusion of tongues and of theories, reminding one of Bushnell's catalogue of theological varieties — "the Supralapsarians and Sublapsarians; the Arminianizers and the true Calvinists; the Pelagians and Augustinians; the Tasters and the Exercisers; Exercisers by divine efficiency and by human self-efficiency; the love-to-being-in-general virtue, the willing-to-be-damned virtue, and the love-to-one's-greatest-happiness virtue; no ability, all ability, and moral and natural ability distinguished; disciples by the new-creating act of Omnipotence, and by change of the governing purpose; atonement by punishment and by expression; limited and general; by imputation and without imputation."[1] Who, then, can be saved? Which is the true method? Which of the competing programs represents "God's way with a soul"? Amidst the confusion it is a comfort to reflect that the divine grace is not conditioned upon the descriptions given in the theological text-books of its invariable and necessary mode of operation.

What is the *ordo salutis* in the prodigal's return and restoration? Which is first — regret, remorse, confidence, or hope? I venture the very unconventional opinion that they were all mixed together. And why was the penitent son's return and confession regarded as sufficient to warrant his cordial and complete reception by his father? Certainly not because it made him at once a perfect boy, or even a perfect son. Not because his casting of himself broken-hearted into his father's arms was equivalent to the sum of all possible filial duty. Nevertheless the relation between that act and a possible perfect sonship was a very real one. Call it the root, or germ, or beginning, or condition of the filial character; it makes little difference — they probably all mean the same. All the possibilities of his perfection as a son are implicit in that resolution and act of returning home.

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[1] *Christ in Theology*, pp. v, vi.

Why, then, should faith be reckoned for righteousness? Is it because there is a vital moral kinship or connection between faith and righteousness, or in spite of the fact that there is none? I conceive the relation between them to be the same as that between the son's returning home, in mingled remorse and hope, and his reception by his father. Now what particular word one will use to describe the character of faith as thus viewed will depend largely upon his own definition of his word. Is faith meritorious, or excellent? Is it a work, or only an acceptance? Is it the condition or the appropriation of salvation? The differences which arise over such questions seem to me to have their root in the difference between a legal and a moral interpretation of justification. Some make the forensic form of the conception determining for the whole doctrine of salvation, while others have primary regard to the moral and spiritual relations and experiences which are involved in the religious life. Our question recurs: What is there about faith which should warrant its acceptance for righteousness?

Ideally considered, righteousness is Godlikeness. The life of progressive and increasing Godlikeness is the righteous life, not in perfection, but in process. The man who enters by faith on that way of righteousness is "declared righteous." Is he so, or is he not? Ideally righteous, that is, morally perfect, he is not, but in desire, aspiration, and effort he has really begun the righteous life. Union with Christ involves growing likeness to Christ, and Christlikeness is righteousness. Faith is the entrance upon right relations to God as revealed in Christ, and the fulfilment of those relations is righteousness. The moment righteousness is ethically regarded, and not defined as a mere legal standing in court, the moment it is admitted that righteousness is a moral character, imperfect but progressing, that moment faith ceases to be a mere formal condition of salvation, without any inner connection with the righteous life, and becomes the step by which that life is entered upon. We may put the same question in other terms: What is the relation of repentance to forgiveness? If one insist upon regarding forgiveness as a mere verdict, he may deny all vital connection between them; but if he conceives forgiveness as the constitution of right personal relations, the founding of a fellowship of life, then repentance is the inseparable moral counterpart of such a restoration and harmony.

To ask why our acceptance with God is conditioned upon faith is like asking why that lost son needs to go home; why, if one will have his father's bounty and blessing, he must take up an obedient and receptive attitude toward his father; why a man's accepting a gift is the condition of his having it. Is faith, then, a "work"? In the sense of a legal *quid pro quo* by which God's grace is purchased, no; in that case grace would be no more grace; but in the sense of a moral achievement, a coming to one's self, a victory of good desire and resolution, yes, for "this is the work of God, to believe on Jesus Christ whom he has sent" (Jn. vi. 29). Real faith is a fact of profound moral significance and value, alike in its more active and its more passive aspects. If it is an acceptance, it is also an aspiration; if it is a renunciation of merit, it is also at least a dawning appreciation of goodness; if it is a repose of soul in God, it is also a panting of the heart after God; if it is confidence in his free and full forgiveness, it is also a yearning for growth in his likeness. Faith is thus the right attitude or disposition of man toward God. In exercising faith a man does what he ought to do, and who shall deny moral value to the doing of what one ought to do? We are justified by faith, we are forgiven upon repentance, because we are saved by grace. All three statements mean the same.

CHAPTER XII

THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

We seem to have emerged at length out of the arena of theological strife into a region of comparative peace. To what extent this is really the case we shall see as we proceed. Certainly this much is true, that the Christian world is fairly well agreed as to what are the principal qualities and duties of the Christian life. We recognize and appreciate them in whatever associations of opinion or of worship they may be found. The Christian character is fundamentally the same in Catholic and Protestant, in Churchman and Dissenter, in Sacramentalist and Quaker, in conservative and in radical. Love, sympathy, humility, patience, and charitableness are coin which pass current everywhere; while hatred and bitterness and all their kindred are admitted by all to be unchristian. They are as unlovely and repulsive when seen in the life of the most orthodox believer as when disfiguring the character of the latitudinarian. There is a degree of agreement among Christians, which is sufficient for all practical purposes, as to what are the fruits of the Spirit, on the one hand, and the works of the flesh, on the other.

This, I take it, is the reason why Christians have so much in common in those acts and exercises which have to do with the expression of religious aspiration or the performance of practical Christian duties, and so little in common in their theoretical explanations of religion. All Christians can use the same Bible and find comfort and edification in its truths and promises; but the instant any historical or theoretical question is raised regarding it, they immediately go "wide as the poles asunder." The hymnody of the Christian ages, in which the devotions, aspirations and hopes of millions of believers have been expressed, is the common heritage of all Christendom. The many sects of Protestantism all sing, in great part, the same hymns. Any religiously minded person could enjoy the cadences of the Greek Church, which so charm the ear and inspire the heart as almost to make one forget the close alliance of this church with political despotism. He must be an extremely prejudiced Protestant whose heart is not touched by the solemn chants of the Roman Catholic ritual, even though they be parts of the mass, the theory of which he utterly repudiates.

I conclude that what unity there is among Christians is chiefly in the sphere of religious feeling and of practical life and duty. Outside that sphere reign difference and division. An evangelistic meeting for the conversion of sinners is conducted in much the same method by those whose theology is Calvinistic as by those whose theories are Arminian, and apparently sinners are saved in the same way in both cases. But question the leaders in such movements and you learn that there is no similarity whatever. In one place they are saved by "a new creating act of omnipotence," in the other by "a change of the governing purpose"; you are in the intricacies of the *ordo salutis.* Yet the preaching is much alike in both places; the prayers are similar, and the hymns are identical. Or, let one enter a Christian church on occasion of the customary Sunday service. They are celebrating the Lord's supper. It is a simple and touching memorial of Christ's supreme self-sacrifice, and all that is said seems harmonious with this simplicity and suggestiveness; but if one were to ask for some explanation concerning this rite, so seemingly clear and self-explanatory, he might, not improbably, hear the most recondite explanation of its mysterious powers and effects, or an elaborate exposition of the proper opinions and practices which alone entitle the disciple of Christ to participation in it. Its practical religious meaning and use seem plain enough; not so the theory.

One cannot help wondering what aspect the Christian world would present to-day if the Church had kept to the policy and program of Jesus. What if the Church in her ideals and efforts had remained predominantly religious and ethical, instead of becoming, as she did, predominantly doctrinal and speculative? It is not easy, indeed, to make such a supposition real to ourselves. We are so accustomed to associate the great doctrinal disputes which have succeeded one another from age to age, with the history and activity of the Church, that they almost seem an essential part of her life. But are they really such? Was the neo-platonic philosophy, which formed the chief substratum of ecclesiastical orthodoxy, essential to Christianity? To take a specific example: Has the Augustinian doctrine of original sin with all the disputes about *universalia ante rem* and *universalia in re* in which it was involved, promoted the real purposes of the Christian religion? As we look back upon the extinct and, as it now often seems, well-nigh meaningless controversies of the past, it is not easy to resist the feeling that the Christian Church might have done a greater work and might now present to the world a better representation of the Spirit of Christ if she had observed the terms of his commission and had not undertaken to annex to her province so many foreign territories, such as those of natural science, archæology, and transcendental metaphysics.

There, are, indeed, those who declare that Christianity is a dogma rather than a life. They mean, I suppose, that the Christian religion consists primarily in a system of doctrines on which the Christian life is dependent. There is doubtless some room for differences in the interpretation and application of such assertions. But what they would seem to involve is the claim that such theories as have been current in the Church concerning the composition of Christ's person, the Trinity, original sin, expiation, and the like — or, some particular selection of these theories —represent the primary purpose of Christ and of the Christian religion in the world. This has certainly been the working theory, if not the avowed opinion, of multitudes of men, particularly of theologians. I would raise the question whether one could derive this impression of the main purpose of Christ and of the meaning of his Kingdom from his own words. Let the advocate of the primacy of dogmas select any assortment of them which seem to him truest and most important. Let him take, for example, unconditional predestination, tripersonal Trinity, the hypostatic union of the eternally begotten Logos with impersonal human nature, native depravity, antecedent imputation, and penal substitution. That is a fairly representative collection of widely accepted orthodox dogmas. Now if Christianity consists primarily in dogmas, it must consist in some particular dogmas. It cannot consist equally in each of two contradictory dogmas. It cannot, for example, consist equally in the dogma that Christ's human nature was personal and in the dogma that it was impersonal; nor, again, can it consist equally in the dogma that we are under the wrath of God from birth because we really sinned in Adam (Augustinian realism), and the dogma that though we did not sin in Adam at all, we are by virtue of God's sovereignty regarded as if we had, and are condemned accordingly (federal imputation). But let my proposed collection, or any other similar assortment of dogmas, be taken as representative. Then let them be compared with the teaching, and life, and life-work of Jesus, and in the light of that comparison the reader shall judge whether they fairly represent the primary purpose of Christ's mission and Kingdom. I do not care to argue the question, but I should like to urge that it be fairly considered.

But even those for whom Christianity consists primarily in dogmas do not deny that it is, secondarily, a life; even for them it is concerned incidentally with character. Let us note one or two classic examples of this correlation and comparative estimate of dogma and life. "Whosoever will be saved," declares the Athanasian creed, "must thus think of the Trinity," and this "thus" is explained to mean the belief in the eternal coequality of three persons in one God, the second of whom is begotten by an eternal process from the first, and the third of whom eternally proceeds from the other two — and yet this creed does not omit to add, quite incidentally, that men must give an account of their works and be judged accordingly. The primacy of dogma is made evident; more than forty paragraphs are devoted to the dogmas belief in which is declared to be essential to salvation; but two sections at the end are reserved for laying emphasis on a good life, so that this is not excluded from the definition of "the Catholic Faith." Jesus and the apostles also spoke frequently of what men must do to be saved, but I can detect no resemblance between what they said and the propositions contained in these forty-one paragraphs.

One may test the question in hand for himself in various ways. The late Dr. Edwin Hatch brings it sharply before us in the opening paragraph of his Hibbert Lectures on the Influence of Greek Philosophy upon Christian Theology. "It is impossible for any one," he says, "whether he be a student of history or no, to fail to notice a difference of both form and content between the Sermon on the Mount and the Nicene Creed. The Sermon on the Mount is the promulgation of a new law of conduct; it assumes beliefs rather than formulates them; the theological conceptions which underlie it belong to the ethical rather than the speculative side of theology; metaphysics are wholly absent. The Nicene Creed is a statement partly of historical facts and partly of dogmatic inferences; the metaphysical terms which it contains would probably have been unintelligible to the first disciples; ethics have no place in it. The one belongs to a world of Syrian peasants, the other to a world of Greek philosophers."[1] The absence of ethics from one of the great ecumenical creeds of Christendom, and the metaphysical conditions of salvation prescribed in another, represent one estimate — still widely current — of the relative value of dogma and of character in the Christian world. But to my mind this estimate only shows how completely the gospel of Jesus became transformed into an esoteric doctrine as remote from the motives and purposes of Jesus' life-work as the unseemly strifes and alienations which it engendered were unproductive of the fruits of his Spirit in mankind. Jesus was wholly concerned with ethics, with begetting and fostering in men the Godlike life. The word "character" summarizes the great interest and life-purpose of Jesus Christ.

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[1] *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*, p. 1.

Inasmuch, then, as Jesus attached supreme importance to the Christian character, — since for him the realization of the Godlike life *is* salvation, — let us proceed to inquire what it includes and by what means it is attained. We observe, first of all, that Jesus had no set formula for defining the character required in his disciples; he employed a variety of terms to set it forth and illustrate it. Definitions are almost inevitably narrowing and exclusive. If, however, any three words were to be selected from the tradition of the Lord's sayings as expressing his conception of the Christian character, they should probably be the words, "righteousness," "love," and "eternal life." The Sermon on the Mount is a typical description of the true righteousness which must characterize the members of the Kingdom — the righteousness which surpasses the legal formalism and ceremonial punctiliousness which the scribes and Pharisees called righteousness. Meekness, mercifulness, aspiration after goodness, purity, peacemaking, humility, patience, charity — these are the constituents of the Christian character as Jesus there portrays it.

But if "righteousness" is one note in this collection of logia, "love" is an equally prominent note. Love all men, even your enemies; suffer injury rather than do injury; do good even to the evil and unthankful; be generous and complete in love as your Father in heaven is — these are the supreme requirements of Christ; these are the qualities and dispositions which constitute men sons of God and members of his Kingdom. And how evident it is that righteousness and love mean the same thing — that the love which Jesus enjoins *is* righteousness. Your righteousness, says Jesus, must exceed that of the scribes, and then he proceeds to illustrate the nature and contents of this superior righteousness by saying: abjure revenge, maintain purity in thought, speak the truth in simplicity and frankness, stand ready to bless and serve all men — in short, exercise a *love* like that of God in its largeness and fulness — that is the true righteousness. How evident it is that we have here an elaboration of the prophetic conception of righteousness as practically synonymous with love. Micah summarizes God's supreme requirement of men in words which sound the key-note of our Lord's teaching in this Sermon: "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God" (Micah vi. 8).

We are thus brought face to face once more with the contrast between the biblical conception of righteousness and that which has been most widely current in traditional theology. Take, for example, this definition of the righteousness of God: It is "not benevolence or a form of benevolence, but a distinct and separate attribute of the divine nature which demands that sin should be visited with punishment."[1] God's righteousness, in this view, be it observed, has no kinship with benevolence or grace, but is "distinct and separate" from these qualities. Place beside this *a priori* definition some of the most characteristic biblical descriptions of the divine righteousness: "A righteous God, *and a Saviour*" (Is. xlv. 21); "Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God; thy judgments are a great deep; *thou savest* man and beast" (Ps. xxxvi. 6); "Deliver me, O God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing of thy *righteousness*" (Ps. li. 14); "Answer me in thy righteousness, and *enter not into judgment* with thy servant" (Ps. cxliii. 1, 2); "I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth" (Jer. ix. 24); "I (Yahweh) that speak in righteousness, *mighty to save*" (Is. lxiii. 1); "God is faithful and *righteous to forgive* us our sins" (1 Jn. i. 9). When, then, God "does justly and loves mercy" does he exercise two wholly "distinct and separate" functions? When he "practises lovingkindness and righteousness" does he perform two acts which are quite unrelated to each other? When he shows himself "a righteous God and a Saviour" does he exhibit two "distinct and separate" characters? When the prophet describes Yahweh as speaking in righteousness, mighty to save, is it as if he said: I who proclaim my fixed and necessary determination to punish all sin, yet in my distinct and separate attribute of mercy (optional as respects its exercise) have decided to save? When God is declared to be "righteous to forgive," is his disposition denoted by "righteous" wholly independent of the benevolent act of forgiving and entirely "distinct and separate" from it? I think I may safely assume that such questions answer themselves.

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[1] Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 417.

But we are dealing with the Christian character. That is defined by our Lord to consist in sonship to God, that is, in moral likeness to him. Now let us apply the maxim of the author just cited, that the supreme excellence in God and man must be the same. This supreme excellence is, then, retaliatory justice. The exercise of mercy is optional with God; it must therefore be optional with us, and we are expressly told that it is so: "As we *may be* kind, but must be righteous, so God in whose image we are made, may be merciful, but must be holy."[1] Now place beside this conception of God and of man — with both of whom it is said to be optional whether they shall be kind and merciful or not — the teaching of Jesus under review that the merciful alone can obtain mercy at God's hands, and that the ideal of human perfection consists in a benevolence like that of God which bestows its benefits on all mankind. Did not Jesus Christ regard unmercifulness as a sin? Did he not speak of it in sternest condemnation? How, then, is the exercise of it among men a matter of choice or preference? Or, to put the matter in a form in which it may be clearly seen and judged, place side by side Dr. Strong's assertion that God and man are alike free to exercise mercy or to refuse to exercise it, and the repeated citation by our Lord of the prophetic word that God's primary demand is mercy (Mt. ix. 13; xii. 7, *cf.* Hos. vi. 6), or such a saying as: "Love your enemies, and do good, and ye shall be sons of the Highest; for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil. Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful"(Lk. vi. 35, 36). I cannot answer for others, but upon my own mind the impression made by this language is distinctly different from that which would be conveyed by saying: You may or may not be merciful as you prefer, for with your Father the exercise of mercy is optional.

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[1] Strong, *Philosophy and Religion*, p. 196.

The various qualities and activities of the Christian character on which Jesus lays most stress are all congruous with what we have found in the mountain Sermon. The true righteousness which makes men sons of God consists in a love like that of God himself. Accordingly, we find strong and frequent emphasis laid upon the requirement to forgive as God forgives. It is his nature and disposition to forgive those who repent and forsake their sins, and the law of Godlikeness requires that we, like him, should forego revenge and stand ready not only to forgive but to bless and serve those who have injured us (Mt. vi. 14, 15). The unmerciful servant who would not imitate his master in forgiving love put himself outside the pale of mercy by refusing to submit his own life to its law (Mt. xviii. 21 *sq.*). Forgiveness is a duty because forgiveness is Godlike. And yet theology has prevailingly conceived of God as indisposed or unable to forgive, or, at best, as only desiring to be willing to do so. The characteristic note in the orthodox doctrine of God is that with him forgiveness even of repentant sinners is extremely difficult and has to be provided for by elaborate plans and great pains; that it is hindered by gigantic obstacles which must first be cleared away; the characteristic note of Jesus' teaching is that God's forgiveness ever waits to descend upon men so soon as they will fulfil the conditions of receiving it. The burden of theology is: How can God overcome the hindrances in his nature to the forgiveness of the penitent — how can his supposed desire to be willing become real and effective willingness? The burden of Jesus' teaching is: How can men be made to desire a Godlike life — how can they be induced to accept in repentance and humility a forgiveness which God is eager to bestow, and to exercise toward other men a similar Godlike readiness to forgive and bless?

The Christian character, then, as Jesus conceived it, is summed up in the one word "Godlikeness." Become the sons of your Father; be like your Father in love, in purity, in readiness to serve and forgive, and you thereby become members of the Kingdom of heaven; to acquire such a character — to live such a life — is salvation. But how are men to know what God's nature and requirements are so that they can understand, desire, and choose them as prescribing the law of their own life? The life and character of Christ himself are the answer. The more abstract demand to be like God is translated into the concrete and unmistakable requirement that the disciple should be as his Master. It is, indeed, the unparalleled marvel of the character of Jesus Christ that we can transfer the qualities of that character, point by point, to God himself with a perfect sense of congruity and truth. If Jesus seems to set before us a high and abstract law for life, he does not leave us without a clear and definite interpretation of it. If he points us to a distant and apparently unattainable goal, he proves himself to be the way to an ever closer approximation to it. The *via Christi* is the way to the Father.

But it is obvious that no mere outward imitation of Christ would fulfil the requirement in question. The specific acts of Jesus, in their external aspects, were as different from those likely to be required of us as ancient oriental life was different from modern western civilization. The effort to reproduce the precise form of Jesus' life and actions, to do in particular circumstances as it is believed Jesus would do in those circumstances, is quite likely to involve and proceed upon what Paul calls a knowledge of Christ after the flesh. We follow Christ only afar off unless we enter into the meaning of the inner life of Jesus. To possess ourselves of the great motives and convictions which animated him — to enter into the realization of his view of life, his estimate of the world, his certitude of God — that is to follow Christ. The fellowship of his inner life is sonship to God. The Christian character is the Christlike spirit.

But even such statements may appear too formal. We must still ask: Just what, specifically, does participation in the spirit of Christ include? What was the most characteristic peculiarity in the life and life-work of Jesus? I believe that the teaching of Jesus himself and the witness of the New Testament as a whole are to the same effect, namely: The central thing in the life of Christ is symbolized by the cross. He came to minister and to give his life; he laid down his life for his friends; in his witness-bearing to the truth of what God is and would help men to be, he consecrated himself to labor and suffering; knowing that he came forth from God, he girded himself for the service of men; he must needs suffer in order to enter upon the glorious triumphs of self-denying love; he will bear the griefs and sicknesses and sins of men in order that he may bear them away.

"But all this," we shall be told, "he was doing officially on our behalf; there is surely no sense in which we can enter into and share these great acts and experiences." But I am constrained to think that Jesus himself and Paul and John thought otherwise. Our Lord did not speak of the experiences symbolized by his cross in terms of an official work done "outside of us." Take up your cross, he says to his disciples, and come after me. Do as I have done to you. He who would save his life must give it: like the grain of wheat, he must die in order to live. We must be crucified with Christ, exclaims Paul. As he laid down his life for us, declares John, so must we lay down our lives for the brethren. Christ's life, it appears, was a representative life of self-giving, and it was so because it had its roots in the life of God, the great Giver. Here is the heart of the gospel: Every man who will enter into life must take up Christ's cross and make it his own cross; he must die daily to the life of selfishness and sin, he must give himself in self-denying, serving love; he must bow his heart to the universal, eternal law of sacrifice which reigned supreme in the life and labor and death of Jesus because he came forth from God and reflected the life of God in humanity. Yes, the cross is the emblem of the Christian character because it symbolizes what is deepest and most characteristic in Christ, and it symbolizes what is deepest in Christ because it expresses what is central in God — the eternal love, the eternal sympathy and self-giving which, in turn, involve the immeasurable sorrow of God over sin.

In one of the visions of the Apocalypse the seer is bidden to look and behold the victorious Lion of the tribe of Judah, the all-conquering Messiah. But when he looked, he saw, not a Lion, but a Lamb, "standing in the midst of God's throne, as though it had been slain" (Rev. v. 6), suggesting that at the heart of God's sovereignty is suffering love. And it is because the eternal will of God is a will of love that Christ, who came to realize the Father's will, saw the meaning of his own life in self-giving. It was at once the Father's commandment and his own choice that he should give his life in absolute self-devotion; the command and the choice were not two, but one, for his consciousness (Jn. x. 18). And since this giving of life was Christ's law, it becomes the law of all Christlike living. This is what the Christian character truly means, and I cannot but think that all other meanings, commonly associated with it, are superficial and trifling in comparison. The cross, I repeat, is the symbol of the Christian character because it speaks the meaning of Christ, and it represents what is most characteristic in Christ because it expresses what is deepest in the heart of God.

What, now, are the sources or producing causes of the Christian character? Is it effected by forces outside of and foreign to us, or is it the development within us of capacities that are native to us? The former is the prevailing theological representation. The "natural man" has been commonly described as utterly dead to all that was divine and good; the moral death in trespasses and sins to which the New Testament refers has been taken in the most absolute and universal sense; man, it is said, is as irresponsive to the influences of the divine Spirit and of the higher life as a corpse is irresponsive to the touch. Such assertions are corollaries of the doctrine of total depravity. If, as that doctrine maintains, all the faculties of man are "only inlets and outlets of sin, channels of corruption"; if there is in man by nature "nothing but sin, no good at all" (Edwards), then, of course, there is nothing in man out of which to develop or on which to build the Christian character; it must be conceived, it would seem, as produced wholly *ab extra* — as imported into man or as constituted by an entire remaking of man. To this length the figures of moral death and new birth have not infrequently been carried out in theology, as they often are, of course, in popular religious teaching.

Such representations give rise to many questions — among them these: Can they be squared with the assumptions and contents of Jesus' teaching? Are they psychologically tenable, or are they examples of the common bondage of theology to figures of speech? Did not our Lord recognize in men some capacity for goodness, however undeveloped — some desires and aspirations to which his gospel of faith and love could appeal? Did his teaching concerning the slavery of men to sinful thought and habit go the length of maintaining that there is in men by nature nothing but sin, no good at all? On the contrary, Jesus appealed to men in the conviction that they were not without capacity to respond to his message, and he often won responses from the most unpromising. There were those who were steeped in prejudice, — the morally blind and deaf, — but even these he did not regard as hopelessly lost and irrecoverable. In the worst of men he found a spark of goodness. He saw in the plain common people, misguided as they were, the promise of a rich spiritual harvest, if only suitable laborers could be had to reap it. That men were by nature susceptible to moral influences and incentives to goodness, despite all their wilful blindness and depravity, was the unswerving conviction of Jesus and the presupposition of all his work.

It is hardly necessary to point out that many of the common popular representations of the new birth are tantamount to saying that the natural man is not a moral being at all, but is only made so by a new creating act of omnipotence. To suppose, however, that a new rational and moral constitution is given in regeneration, is to confound a moral with a metaphysical change and to antagonize the primal certainty of personal identity. The overworking of such figures of speech as have been mentioned has often led to a conception of "moral inability," which is inconsistent with the most self-evident facts of human nature — facts which alone make possible a religious life for man on any terms or by any means. Christ and the apostles appealed to sinful men to repent and turn to God in response to their warnings and assurances of forgiveness. Yet conversion is popularly represented as something wrought upon man. For this misapprehension there is some excuse in the fact that in our common English version the appeal to *turn* to God is uniformly mistranslated "be converted." In every case, however, the verb so rendered is active in force—*turn* or *turn yourselves* to God in repentance and trust.[1] The Revised Version has corrected these renderings. In the New Testament conversion is always represented as man's act — an act of which he is capable under the appeal and influence of the truth. It might have been a check upon the more extreme popular forms of the doctrine of man's natural inability if it had been known that the New Testament never represents conversion as an act of God, but attributes it to man in either one of two ways, either to the sinner himself or to the influence of some other man upon him. That in the first preaching of the gospel sinners were called upon to turn to God, assumes that the gospel message was not wholly alien to them, but was adapted to quicken and call forth in them a native religious capacity which belongs to man as such.

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[1] *E.g.*, Mk. iv. 12 = Mt. xiii. 15 = Jn. xii. 40 = Acts xxviii. 27: A. V., "be converted," R. V., "turn again" (Gr. *ἐπιστρέψωσιν*); Mt. xviii. 3: A. V., "Except ye be converted, and become as little children," etc., R. V., "Except ye turn," etc. (Gr. *ἐὰν μὴ στραφῆτε*), a passive form used in a middle or reflexive sense, as elsewhere in N. T. (*vid.* Thayer's *Lexicon*); Lk. xxii. 32: A. V., "when thou art converted," R. V., "when once thou hast turned again" (Gr. *ἐπιστρέψας*); Acts iii. 19: A. V., "Repent and be converted," R. V., "Repent and turn again" (Gr. *ἐπιστρέψατε*); *cf.* Jas. v. 19, 20, where the verb in question is used of the influence of one man upon another: He that *converts*, that is, *turns* one from the error of his way, etc.

The human soul is, as Tertullian said, "naturally Christian," that is, adapted by nature to religion. The Christian life is the flowering and fulfilment of man's native capacities and possibilities as the offspring and image of God. The Christian character is not foreign, but germane, to human nature. In the religious life man finds and realizes himself. He is meant for his Father's house and his Father's fellowship. When he lives in the far country of selfishness and sin, he is forfeiting his birthright and losing himself. He comes to himself only as he comes back to his Father. Man is by nature a child of God, even if he be a lost and wandering and sinful child. He is in his true possibilities and destination a son of God, even if by reason of an unfilial life he has belied the name and feels that he is "no more worthy to be called a son." Into the disputed exegetical questions regarding the fatherhood of God and the sonship of man to God in the teaching of Jesus, we cannot now enter.[1] Suffice it to say that, beyond all question, our Lord regarded man as by nature kindred to God from whom he came, and therefore constitutionally religious. Whether he called all men sons of God or called only those so who were striving to realize the true idea of sonship in obedience and likeness to God, in no essential way affects the truth of our main contention. If, as I think, only the latter class are so described in Jesus' teaching, it is no less true that the evil and unthankful are in their capacities, possibilities, and true destination sons of God. If the wayward prodigal is not worthy to bear the name of son in its true meaning, he is no less, in a real sense, a son ; he still has the capacity to resume right relations to his father. He is a self-banished son who has, for the time, disinherited himself, but the Father has not ceased, on that account, to be all that he ever was in willingness to bless, in love, and in compassion. Father and son are kindred, despite the separation and alienation. Sin does not annul God's fatherhood, though it sunders the relations of fellowship. The natural bond of essential kinship remains as the guaranty that the true filial life is still possible and may be entered upon by repentance and conversion and increasingly realized by continued fidelity and obedience.

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[1] These topics are discussed in my *Theology of the New Testament*, Pt. I. ch. vi.

The human influences which operate in the production of the Christian character are many and various. Some of them are so mysterious and subtle that we can but dimly trace and partially describe them. Such, for example, is the force of heredity. That the native disposition, the type of mind, which is bequeathed by ancestors to their descendants has much to do with the development of their religious character is an unquestionable fact. Theology has made much of the influence of heredity upon the moral life in the propagation of sin, but has never developed any corresponding doctrine of its effect in the promotion of virtue. But it is evident that in whatever sense sin is promoted by those mysterious forces which we sum up in the term "heredity," the same law holds good for the propagation of righteousness by the same means. If there is any fact corresponding to the words "hereditary sin," there is an equally important fact corresponding to the words "hereditary goodness." It is rank pessimism to say that the laws of nature work for man's moral degradation and not also for his betterment. "Grace travels by the same conveyance as sin," Dr. Bushnell used to say.

Then there is the world of personal relations and influences in the midst of which we live. Into this complex of forces which operate upon every life enter so many factors that we are quite powerless to separate and describe them. Parental influence, early training, Christian teaching, the moral and religious atmosphere, our own meditations and aspirations, the voice of conscience, the conviction of sin, which were impossible without some sense, however indistinct, of a perfection which is our true ideal and goal — these are the names of some of the forces which quicken our religious natures and help to build the Christian character. It is one of the happy signs of the times that these forces or influences are now being subjected to close, sympathetic psychological study. Bushnell's *Christian Nurture* was a pioneering effort in this direction which has been followed up by the work of various philosophical experts.[1] Thus at length the old *a priori ordo salutis*, framed on the assumption that its exponents were located at the divine centre and were contemplating the operation of the grace of God from above downward, is likely to give place to a more real and natural conception of the religious life and character consonant with the constitution of man and constructed in accordance with his experience.

But among all the powers and influences which we can perceive and make real and definite to ourselves those are the greatest which are distinctly associated with the name of Christ. As our life unfolds, the Bible and the Church and all the institutions and agencies of religion mean to us what Christ means to us. In him we find, more and more, the interpretation of the real nature and meaning of the religious life. In the unclouded mirror of his certitude and consciousness of God we see ourselves reflected — in the real moral poverty of our life, but also in the possible enrichment of it through union with him. Traditional theology has, indeed, accorded to the moral influence of Jesus only a secondary importance. The reason is apparent. This theology is reared upon a philosophical dualism. God and the world are disparate; the world is an undivine, evil sphere. In like manner, man is differentiated as far as possible from God; he is utterly sinful and hostile to God.[1] Edwards expressed the traditional doctrine of human nature by saying that man was naturally so great an enemy to God that he would, if he could, hurl the Almighty from his throne. As a divine person, Christ is regarded as being at an infinite remove from us. He is not near enough to us to make his personal influence an appreciable practical force. His value is that he "transacts with God" (Dr. Orr) on our behalf. We must mount in thought into the world where the eternal persons of the Trinity take counsel together and the claims of rival attributes are adjusted, in order to discover his significance for the religious character.

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[1] Among treatises of this character those best known to me are: E. D. Starbuck's *The Psychology of Religion* (1899); Frank Granger's *The Soul of a Christian* (1900), and G. A. Coe's *The Spiritual Life* (1900) and *The Religion of a Mature Mind* (1902).

But what if God and man are not essentially disparate and mutually hostile? What if the world and the natural life of man are not neutral spheres, bereft of God's presence and alien to his Spirit? What if Christ is not to be brought down from the heavens above or brought up from the abyss beneath, but is very near us? What if his divineness consists in his nearness to us — that is, in his perfect realization of the true, divine ideal of human nature? On any view of God's relation to the world which even a philosophic theism (to say nothing of a vital theology) would sanction to-day, the influence of Jesus Christ, as the incarnation of the immanent God in our humanity, is the most potent and practical power which ever does or ever can touch our life. For myself I believe that we have scarcely begun to appreciate the significance and saving power of such a personality and such a life as that of Jesus Christ in our world, and that no theology which was not practically deistic and dualistic could ever remand it to any secondary place. Of course if all men are by nature moral corpses, there need be no talk of personal example and influence; in that case, men must first be created moral beings by some celestial dynamics. Worse still, if men are naturally so hostile to God that (as Edwards said), they would, if possible, blot God out of being, then the notion of drawing out their religious capacities in a natural and normal development under instruction and guidance is out of the question. They must be conquered and subjugated by a superior alien power. But what if these are not so much Christian as heathen conceptions?

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[1] Not long since I heard one of the most thoughtful and widely experienced missionaries on the foreign field — Rev. Robert A. Hume, D. D. — say (in substance) this: "One of the deepest differences between heathenism and Christianity consists in their respective views of the relations of God and man. Heathen religions put God and man as far apart as possible; Christianity brings them as close together as possible. In heathenism God and man are alien; in Christianity they are kindred." If this is so, the question is pertinent: Is the traditional theology Christian?

Methinks I see the reader at this point arming himself with texts: "What about the 'natural man' who is 'not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be'? Does not John say that 'the whole world lieth in the evil one'? Are not all men, according to Paul, 'by nature children of wrath'?" I reply: Paul's natural or psychic man is the contrast to the spiritually minded man. The one description, as little as the other, refers to what men are by nature and from birth. The apostle is dealing with the contrast of two developed moral characters. So, too, the Johannine contrast of light and darkness, of evil and good, is a moral, not a metaphysical, contrast. The world is, indeed, evil enough, but that is because it has chosen darkness rather than light, not because it is by nature alien to God and demoniacal. With the passage about "children of wrath" I have dealt elsewhere (p. 314). But if John had adopted, instead of opposing, Gnostic dualism; if Paul had been saturated, instead of tinged, with late Jewish deism, that would not alter the fact that Jesus conceived of man as kindred to God and of himself as the interpreter of God to man and of man to himself, and taught that under his influence and inspiration men were to rise into fellowship with God and to realize the life of sonship, that is, of moral likeness to God.

But I foresee another objection which I can well believe has been gathering force in the reader's mind as he has proceeded through this chapter: Is the Christian character, then, a mere human development — the mere unfolding of latent capacities in us? What place is left for the grace of God, for the work of the divine Spirit? What of regeneration and sanctification? Is the Christian life all a matter of man's unaided power? Are we to end in sheer naturalism?

In reply I would say, first of all, that I do not admit that there is any such thing as man's unaided power. I hold that man lives and has his being in vital relation with God, and that religion is the realization and perfecting of that relation. Religion is not, therefore, something special and unnatural — something superimposed upon the natural life of man. It is the fulfilment of man's nature as a son of God — the progressive attainment of his divine ideal. The irreligious life is a deflection from that ideal — a forfeiture of man's inheritance from God. It is the sinful and irreligious life which is unnatural and the religious life which is natural, that is, consonant with man's nature. To suppose that the nature of man is essentially irreligious, and that religion is a foreign addition to his life, is possible only on the assumptions of a dualistic and pessimistic philosophy. I would raise the question, whether such objections as have been specified above do not really arise, however unconsciously, from just such a philosophy.[1]

My answer, then, to these objections would be this: The Christian character is not a mere human development, an unfolding of human capacities in separateness from

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[1] Archdeacon Wilson says of the type of theology to which I here allude, that it is "essentially dualistic and tends to dualism and division everywhere. It sharply distinguishes," he continues, "the natural from the supernatural, the material from the spiritual, the sacred from the profane, the human from the divine. It leads on to distinctions of converted from unconverted, laity from clergy, inspired from uninspired, Church from world. It creates a passion for distinctions. It separates the Father from the Son; God's justice from his mercy; the gift from the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It defines everything, and definition almost necessitates the materialization of our thoughts; it defines the stages of salvation, the modes and conditions of transmission of the divine life through the sacraments," etc. *The Gospel of the Atonement*, pp. 144, 145.

God, for the reason that there is, and can be, no such separateness. The conception of a mere human development, on the one hand, and of the operation of the divine Spirit, on the other, rests upon a false contrast. Even philosophical theism has transcended it in its doctrine of the immanent God. Where, then, is the place for the action of God in the religious life? I answer: Everywhere. There is no range or sphere of the true, normal life of man from which God's Spirit of grace is ever absent. To the objection that I would make the Christian character wholly natural, I reply that I would make it wholly supernatural. In other words, I repudiate the philosophical dualism which is implied in the contrast commonly made between the natural and the supernatural. The contrast is as false and as pernicious as the popular distinction between sacred and secular. All life is sacred. The natural world and the natural life of man are not diabolical or undivine, and religion a revolt against nature. Religion is rather the realization of man's true nature in fellowship with God.

In such a view of religion there is no room for any one-sided subjectivism. The Holy Spirit is the immanent God. The divine grace is as pervasive as the light. Regeneration is not a *donum superadditum*, a strange, unnatural process wrought upon the soul by an alien force; it is the illumination and moral quickening of the soul by the eternal Light when the life is thrown open to welcome its full presence and power. Darkness reigns only where the light is excluded. The divine Spirit presses in upon every life as the light floods the world at the dawn of day. As well say that the sunlight and the teeming life of nature are foreign and essentially hostile to each other as that God and the natural life of man which flowed from him are alien and opposed. God is hostile, not to the nature, but to the persistent unnaturalness of man; the contrast is not between the divine and the natural, but between the divine and the unnatural. The natural life of man is the religious life; the realization of his true idea is the Christian character.

Sanctification is the progressive attainment of union with God. It is growth in Godlikeness — the increasing realization of the mind of Christ. It is not a special, ecstatic experience, though special experiences may promote it. It is the development of the Christian character and is not, therefore, attained at a bound, though there may be crises in life which involve sudden and great forward movements in its realization. It is not a mere emotional state of desire or aspiration after perfection ; it is an actual identification of the will with goodness, a progressive achievement of the Christian virtues, a growth into the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. The test of sanctification is simple but very searching ; it is this : likeness to God as he is revealed and interpreted in Jesus Christ. To sum up all in few words : Religion is the union of man with God, the Godlike life, the Christian character — which is salvation.

CHAPTER XIII

SALVATION AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THE idea of the Kingdom of God has been made in recent years the subject of much careful research and vigorous discussion. Its Old Testament presuppositions, its original and later forms, the questions whether it is a temporary or a universally applicable conception, whether it denotes a present or a future fact or state, its relation to the notion of the Church, whether it is the central idea of Jesus' teaching and how far it is available as the regulative principle of Christian theology — these are some of the themes which have engaged attention. I shall touch upon these topics only incidentally.[1] I will only say that to me it seems clear that the Kingdom was not, in the teaching of Jesus, primarily an eschatological conception, as so many scholars now maintain. It appears to have denoted a present fact — a form of fellowship or mode of life which men might enter upon here and now, even though its perfect realization might not be attained in this world. The current expectation in the early Church of the near return of the Lord and of the end of the age naturally transformed it into an eschatological conception. It had already become such to the mind of Paul. As to the other points in dispute, I should say that the mere *form* of the conception has a local and temporary character; it is derived from ideas associated with the Jewish theocracy. Nevertheless, it is the symbol of an abiding fact — the spiritual reign of God in the hearts of the Godlike. It was, at least, a prominent idea of our Lord and represents one of the great aims of his saving mission.

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[1] They are more particularly considered in my *Theology of the New Testament*, Part I. ch. iii., and *The Teaching of Jesus*, ch. v.

If one were to frame a short, sharp definition of the Kingdom of God, he would inevitably narrow the idea of it. Not only did Jesus give no definition of it, but he appears to have used it in some variety of meanings. It is a large and more or less fluid conception. It will be sufficient for our purpose to employ it as the symbol of the social purpose and effect of the gospel. If the immediate object of Jesus' life and labors was to renew the lives of individual men, there can be no doubt that, implicit in this renewal, there is the further purpose and effect, to reconstitute the social relations of men in accord with the motives and principles which he implants in the heart. It is true enough that Jesus dealt with men as individuals ; he had a profound sense of the sacredness and worth of the person, but it is equally true that he regarded the person, not as isolated, but as implicated in a complex of relations. The love which he sought to kindle in human hearts is not a separating but a uniting principle ; it does not permit men to remain apart and indifferent to each other, but draws them together in mutual sympathy and reciprocal service. The gospel contains a social principle. Christianity is a social religion ; it finds its expression not merely in individual betterment but in the development of the fraternal spirit — not merely in an ennobled personal life, but in a new sense of duty to others ; Christianity can realize its aim in the world only in a community, a fellowship, a social life. For our present purpose, then, we may use the "Kingdom of God" to denote the reign of love among men, or the fellowship of men in Christian love. It embraces all who are seeking to live the Godlike life ; the test of membership in it is sonship to God.

The school of Ritschl has been especially active in promoting the investigation of the doctrine of the Kingdom, and in assigning to it a place of importance commensurate with that which it held in the teaching of Jesus. Ritschl held that the salvation of the individual could be realized only by participation in the life of the Christian community. For him the Spirit of God was a name for the knowledge of God, which Christ has made the peculiar possession of this community. The great aim of the gospel is to found a fellowship of those who, through Christ, have come to know God as their Father and each other as brethren, and the resulting community becomes, in turn, the chief depository and vehicle of the divine grace to mankind. The Ritschlian theology wears a strongly social cast.[1] It lays great stress upon the Church as a means of grace; only it does not locate this grace in the Church's rites or organization, but in the knowledge of God, the fellowship with God, which is the distinguishing mark of its true life. But Ritschl did not on this account identify the Church with the Kingdom. The Church is the organization of believers for the worship of God; it promotes the Kingdom of God "in so far as the members of the community give themselves to the interchange of action prompted by love."[2] The promotion of this fellowship of love, which is the principle of the Kingdom, is the aim of all the institutions and agencies to which religion gives rise.

Some of these opinions of Ritschl were, undoubtedly, presented in a too unqualified, and even paradoxical, form; but they serve all the better, perhaps, to thrust upon our attention some considerations which are either too much neglected or viewed in an equally one-sided way in traditional dogmatics. When, for example, salvation is viewed as an isolated experience of the individual, — as it has been so extensively viewed in Protestant theology, — the tendency is to lose sight of a large part of the real meaning of salvation; namely, a life of reciprocal duties and services, animated by love. The chief emphasis in this mode of viewing the subject lies upon the exemption of the individual from suffering in a future state. In proportion as the individual is conceived as saved wholly by and for himself, the tendency is also likely to be to emphasize as the primary condition of salvation some conviction or opinion which the person concerned is urged to make his own. Who that has observed religious movements at all closely, has not often heard an account of the process of salvation of which the following would be a fair outline : You must, first of all, believe that Christ has paid your debt to God for you ; accepting this for true, you are released from the burden of your guilt and from liability to punishment in the world to come ; as an additional assurance of heaven, it will now be your duty to join this or that church, which, by its divinely authenticated organization, or its correct theological theories or ritual practices, offers superior guaranties for your future safety.

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[1] "Religion is always social." *Justification and Reconciliation*, p. 578.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 290.

If to this it be said, on the one hand, that the statement is very one-sided, and, on the other, that it covers important truths, I grant the correctness of both remarks. It purports to be the statement of a one-sided case, and the point is that it has been, on a very large scale, an actual method of presenting the claims and benefits of religion. Beyond question, important truths are emphasized, — forgiveness and release from punishment, —but others are overlooked or obscured in such representations. Salvation is mostly personal insurance ; the motto is : Flee for safety — every man for himself ! But the question is : What is safety, and where is safety to be found in God's world? Am I making surest of safety when I am giving supreme attention to the question how I can make certain of my personal happiness in a future world, regardless, perhaps, of how much misery I cause for others here ?

The realization of salvation is, in important respects, a social experience. Doubtless there is a sense in which salvation concerns the direct relation of each individual soul to God ; yet this is a very inadequate account of the matter. Is the relation of the soul to God correctly conceived in the popular thought which pictures God as seated in the heavens above us and as relating himself to us, as one may say, only from above downward ? Are we related to God only vertically, and not also laterally ? Do we not come into contact with him in and through his world, and especially in and through his Spirit which abides in the believing community? He may, indeed, be conceived as acting upon us directly, immediately; no doubt he does so. But it must be just as true that the divine life touches and penetrates our life indirectly or mediately through our divinely constituted relations, such as those of the family and the Church. It is chiefly through these agencies, so far as we can judge, that we have received our knowledge of God and have come into the fellowship of his life. Most of us have, in fact, realized our salvation, that is, attained the conviction and consciousness of sonship to God, through that revelation of God to us which is the possession and inspiration of the Christian society of which we are a part.

I would raise the question whether the conception that salvation is a purely individual affair, is not really a corollary of the doctrine of the divine transcendence, held and applied in a one-sided way. If God is remanded in thought to some distant region, and is conceived of as so highly exalted above our world as to have little real, practical relation with it, do we not have in that conception the root of the individualistic view of salvation? If, now, we supplement this idea with that of the divine immanence, and say that just as truly as "God's in his heaven," so truly is he also in his world; if he is to be found of us not so much by ascending into the heights or descending into the depths as by opening our eyes to the evidences of his presence which are very near us, then do we not find in such a view the basis for the social idea of salvation? It seems to me that the two conceptions of our subject under review correspond, in general, to the conceptions of the divine transcendence and the divine immanence, respectively, and really arise out of these differing ideas of God's relation to the world.

It should be added that the two views in question are not necessarily inconsistent with each other, and that they become so only when they are held in a one-sided way. They are no more inconsistent than the transcendence and immanence of God are inconsistent with each other. They are complementary, not contradictory. If the life of God is not exhausted in the world ; if he is more than all his manifestations in nature and history, it surely does not follow that he is not expressed or that he does not vitally dwell in the world which has its being in him. If God, in some mysterious way, directly touches and influences our life, that fact is in no way inconsistent with his lateral approach to us through our social relations in family, school, and Church. It is, perhaps, abstractly conceivable that salvation should be realized by the individual in entire isolation from all human influences and agencies, but really this is hardly more than a purely theoretic supposition. Few men, if any, have ever lived so isolated a life as this supposition assumes. Men are, in fact, implicated in a complex of relations with their fellows and, in general, they realize their life in and through these relations. Philosophers tell us that only in such a relational life is mental development possible. Self-consciousness itself unfolds by a process of action and reaction. Reciprocity is a law of life. The same principle has its application in religion. The religious life is essentially social. "No man liveth to himself," whether in the later developments of the religious life or in its earlier beginnings. Christ died for us that we should not live unto ourselves, but rather take and fill our place in a society which should embody his Spirit and diffuse it in the life of the world.

Our knowledge of God is mediated through history and through an experience which is much more complex than we can easily realize. Theologians have disputed whether men find God primarily through the Church, or through the Bible, or through the use of their individual reason. Such disputes proceed upon false antitheses. In practice there is no such thing as an isolated individual reason investigating and appropriating religious truths all alone by itself. The moment such an individual reads another man's book, hears another man's discourse, or enters into any form of intercourse with other men respecting religious truth and life, that moment he is a sharer with others in the common religious life and convictions. But even if he did none of these things, how could he escape the atmosphere of religious thought and experience in which he has grown up and lives? As well say that he can live his physical life apart from the surrounding air.

But does not man find salvation in the Bible? The current popular way of urging that this is the case is often closely kindred to that which we observe to have been common in our Lord's time. "Ye search the Scriptures," said Jesus to his contemporaries, "because ye think that in them ye have eternal life" (Jn. v. 39), but he intimates that they do not find it there. In the Scriptures we acquaint ourselves with the saving experience of multitudes of men, with the principles of life and duty, with a full and adequate account of the way of salvation; but the bare knowledge of these facts and truths does not constitute salvation. We must make them our truths; we must repeat them in our own life; we must enter into analogous experiences. This we can do only by an activity and appropriation of our own. In this appropriation our reason, that is, our total capacity to know and embrace truth, is engaged. To suppose that we find salvation in the Bible as if it were a kind of commodity which we can take up and carry away with us, is a conception appropriate only to a juvenile stage of religious thought. There is no such thing as deriving salvation from the Bible apart from the rational and vital realization in experience of those truths and laws of life which the Bible describes and illustrates. I mention these points in order to show how unwarranted are some of the separations and rivalries made in popular polemics among the various "sources" of the knowledge of God and of salvation. When one remembers that salvation is a Godlike personal life, it is evident that salvation is in experience and character. In any proper meaning of words it can no more reside in the Bible than the life of plants can reside in a text-book on botany.

A further consideration is still more germane to our subject — the social or corporate aspect of the experience of salvation. We cannot, without the greatest arbitrariness, separate the Bible from the Church in the sense which the word "Church" originally bore—the congregation of Christian believers. But for such a community there never would have been such a compilation of books as the New Testament. The books of that collection are largely themselves the product and record of the religious experience of the early Church. Apart from that experience, that Christian community-life in the new knowledge of God and sense of his presence given through Christ, these books never could have arisen—much less have been collected and preserved. When, therefore, a man in the utmost conceivable isolation sits down with his Bible, determined, perhaps, to find God alone by the aid of this book, he is really making himself a partner with the believers of the first age who treasured the words of Christ and drew out their applications of his teaching to life in the glow of that enthusiasm and the warmth of that love to men which so suffuse the New Testament as to make it the classic of all Christian literature.

How preposterous to separate the Bible and the Church, and to discuss from which of the two we derive the saving knowledge of God! Alike in Bible and in Church we are relating ourselves to a collective Christian experience and life. In any adequate view of the subject, Bible, Church, and reason all coöperate to the same end. Just as in the intellectual life, the individual's efforts are made under the influence and with the coöperation of other minds, so the religious life is realized in a community of conviction and experience.

It is not meant, of course, that there are no proper applications of such distinctions as have been mentioned. We may properly enough contrast the Christian thought of the first age, as reflected in the New Testament, with the later developments of ecclesiastical dogma. We may compare the creeds of Christendom with the teaching of Jesus, and, in so doing, will often find the differences deep and wide. In this sense one may say: I will adhere to the Bible as against the (later) Church; I will hold to the teaching of Jesus and of the apostles as against the more elaborate formulations of theological doctrine. But such a determination is not properly described as a choice between Bible and Church. It is rather a choice between the Church of one age and the Church of another, or between the view of religion which was presented by the Founder of Christianity and was expounded by his apostles and their associates, and views which have been elaborated in later times under what may be held to have been foreign influences.

These considerations are intended to illustrate the fact that, in actual experience, God becomes known to us, and our salvation in fellowship with him is mediated, through a great variety of means which are social and may be summed up in the term, "the Kingdom of God." The means of grace have predominantly this character. The study of Sacred Scripture and of all Christian history and literature, the public worship of God, the celebration of the sacraments of the Church — these and all such aids to the Christian life signify our participation in the fellowship of the believing community. The forces which are summed up in the family are of this character. The bearing of heredity in creating the presumptions of our moral development, the influence of a religious spirit in the home, the power of paternal example — these are, as we may say, God's natural means of grace for the promotion of the Christian life in mankind.

This principle is, indeed, recognized, in some form and degree, among Christians universally. Nevertheless, not infrequently, a one-sided individualism has virtually nullified the principle and has, in effect, denied it in practice. For example, the conception to which reference has already been made, that the natural life of man is totally alienated from God and from all goodness, has powerfully tended to rob the family of its true significance in the founding and fostering of the Kingdom of God. In this view the native instincts of love and service, and such impulses to kindness, generosity, and the like as men might inherit and foster, were, at the most, only "civil" virtues. Some of the older divines would not call them virtues in any sense, but would brand them as vices, deserving not the approval but the wrath of God. But to take the distinction between natural and spiritual goodness only in the milder form in which Edwards maintained it, how evident it is that it was fatal to any serious recognition of heredity or family life as chief agencies for the promotion of religion.

On the contrary, the views in question set the natural and the supernatural in sharpest contrast and contradiction. In the natural man there was said to be no spark or germ of goodness; his mere natural affection, his instinctive love and care for his own, and the reciprocal love and trust of his children were, religiously considered, insignificant and valueless. The children were as destitute of any scintilla of goodness and divineness as their "unregenerate" parents; like serpents they had imbibed from their earliest existence only the poison of sin. The writings of the older divines teem with examples of this mode of thought concerning the natural life of mankind. Nathaniel Mather made this entry in his diary concerning his own sinful state when a mere child: "When very young I went astray from God and my mind was altogether taken with vanities and follies, such as the remembrance of them doth greatly abase my soul within me. Of the manifold sins which then I was guilty of, none so sticks upon me as that, being very young, I was whittling on the Sabbath day, and for fear of being seen I did it *behind the door*. A great reproach of God! a specimen of that *atheism* I brought into the world with me!" Such was the early Puritan view of human nature.

As has been already intimated, philosophy has already provided us with a partial antidote to such conceptions in its doctrine of the immanent God. It has opened the way to a different view of nature and man. It is certainly no new view, for it pervades our ancient Scriptures; it is rather a recovery of a conception which had been obscured, or even lost, in the deistic and dualistic orthodoxy which has so long dominated the thoughts of men. It has not been sufficiently considered by theologians, and has hardly entered the popular mind at all, that the changes which are going on now in theology are chiefly due neither to historic and literary research — important as these are — nor to the native perverseness and wanton irreligiousness of those who are breaking with dogmatic tradition, but to a changed conception of God — his character, his method of action, and his relation to the world and man. Those who wish to arrest the tide of modern thought on the problems of religion should direct their attention to the real logical source and cause of the movement. Nothing could be more futile and irrelevant than merely to protest that modern critics are in error about the authorship and composition of sundry biblical books, or to resent the application of criticism to venerable traditions. Such protests can effect nothing unless men can be convinced that they ought to return to the earlier conception of a remote Deity, of an undivine or demoniacal world, and of an order of natural processes and laws contrived and operated for man's ruin and not for his betterment. In a word, theological reconstruction must and will go on while men continue to believe in evolution, in the immanence of God, in the fundamental unity of the natural and the supernatural, and in the laws of nature and the instincts of man's life as God's universal methods of gracious operation.

Christianity, then, is not a foreign importation into the world. It is not a system of recondite speculations which men have elaborated. It was not argued into existence. It is not here because theologians are defending it, nor would it leave the world if all these should argue against it. It is here because God is in his world and because the life of God is the light of men. It is here because God has revealed himself to man and disclosed man to himself in Christ, and has taught us in him what sonship to God is and how we may attain it. Now the experience of salvation is the realization of these truths. It is the recognition of an ever present God and the ennobling and sanctifying of what we call our natural life and common relations by seeing and fulfilling them all as sacred and divine. True religion does not consist so much in doing special and extraordinary things as in doing all things with a sense of their dignity and value — a connecting of all duties with God and with our own sonship to him.

In such a view of religion, salvation cannot be a mere isolated, individual experience. It involves the fulfilment of the relations in which God has set us. Religion is the life of love, and love is a relational affair. It means sympathy, fraternity, service. The increased dominance of such a mode of life is the coming of the Kingdom of God. Now the individual fulfils the ideal of the Christian life only in a partial manner if he does not in some way help to promote this reign of love among men. And how can he be called a Christian at all who, whatever his beliefs or technically religious acts, makes it the chief aim of his life to defeat and oppress others and in wanton selfishness to trample on the God-given rights of other men? It matters not what may be a man's opinions, though they be the most authoritatively approved and as correct as their most ardent supporters suppose them to be; it matters not what church he patronizes nor how generously, nor in what sacraments he participates, if his life defies the principles of that Kingdom of love and helpfulness to which Christ gave the law, he cannot abide the test which the Master applied when he spoke of those who call him Lord, Lord, but did not the things which he commanded, and of those who even prophesied and did many wonderful works in his name, to whom, nevertheless, he was compelled to say, I never knew you; you never lived in my company; between us there is no kinship of spirit; we are strangers.

The conception of salvation as sonship to God, and as involving consequent brotherhood among men, supplies the key for determining the relation of the Church and of all particular sects or parts of it, and of all the various institutions and agencies of religion, to the Kingdom of love, the reign of the Spirit of Christ in the world. It seems clear, on the one hand, that the Church and the Kingdom cannot be identified, unless the word "Church" is used in a highly idealized sense. If we mean by the Church the congeries of organizations which call themselves by that name, and by the Kingdom of God the reign of Christian love, then certainly we cannot say that Church and Kingdom are, in any sense, synonymous. There has been too much that was unchristian in organized Christianity and too much Christlike goodness outside all churches, to permit us to say that the Church and Kingdom are one and the same, or the same thing viewed from different sides. The Church, however, is an aid and, as I think, despite all its faults, the most effective instrument in the promotion of the Kingdom of God among men. It may be said that in proportion as the Church realizes its ideal, it would become coincident with the Kingdom, that it would then include all the forces of Christian goodness within itself, and exclude all that is at variance with the Spirit of Christ. But is such an ideal ever realizable in an organization which must always be, in a sense, a human institution? The Church is administered by fallible men ; it is composed, as it must be and should be, of imperfect men ; it is a hospital for those who need help and strength, and not a paradise for the perfectly sanctified. Is it possible for such an institution, or for any one of a number of such institutions, to represent more than approximately the ideals of the Kingdom of God? To me it seems to be no reproach of the Christian Church to say that it is not possible.

Recognizing this difference between Church and Kingdom, and reminding us how much our Lord had to say of the Kingdom and how infrequently he used the word "Church" (Mt. xvi. 18; xviii. 17), some have drawn the conclusion that Jesus did not contemplate the founding of any organization such as we now denote by that term. It is certainly true that the word "Church," as used in the passages just cited, carries quite different associations from those which it bears in our modern usage. *Ecclesia* is the Greek name for the assembly or congregation of Israel. In Christian usage it denotes the collective believing community.

Accordingly, our earlier English translations rendered the word "congregation," and not "Church." In the Bishops' Bible (1568), for example, we read in Mt. xvi. 18, "Upon this rock I will build my congregation." It was not until the appearance of our so-called "authorized," or King James's, version (1611) that the earlier rendering of *ecclesia* was supplanted by the word "Church." Originally this term denoted a congregation, brotherhood, or community; now it denotes an outwardly organized society with officers and laws. Hence Dr. Hort very justly remarks: "The English term 'Church,' now the most familiar representative of *ecclesia* to most of us, carries with it associations derived from the institutions and doctrines of later times, and thus cannot at present, without a constant mental effort, be made to convey the full and exact force which originally belonged to *ecclesia*."[1]

This fact, however, does not seem to me to warrant the conclusion that the formal organization of believers for more effective coöperation was no part of the plan of Christ. It is certain, indeed, that Christ did not formally organize what, in modern parlance, we should call a Church. He did, however, call twelve men into permanent association with himself and give to them a certain official character as his representatives and messengers. The apostles were the chief human agents in teaching Christ's truth and in founding and fostering churches after the Master's departure; and such I cannot doubt they were intended to be. Here, then, we see the nucleus of an organization or congeries of organizations. The life of faith and love needed a visible form of manifestation. Provision must be made for common worship, fellowship, and work. The truth of the Kingdom reigning in the hearts of men will have its social expression, however inadequate such expression may prove to be. It appears to me, therefore, a reasonable inference that Jesus contemplated the organization of his disciples into a formally constituted society as the consequence of the Kingdom's nature and working and as the most effective instrument for its promotion. That the Kingdom may most effectually leaven the life of the world, it must avail itself of the power which resides in the social instincts of men, and in the common sympathies and increased activity which these social instincts foster. The Kingdom of God is far more and greater than any church or all churches, but the Kingdom needs and uses churches as means essential to the accomplishment of its ends.

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[1] *The Christian Ecclesia*, p. 1.

But whatever may have been the conscious purpose of Christ respecting the ways and means by which his truth was to be conserved and the life of love fostered among men, it is evident, in a historical view of the case, that the body of believers could never have held together and persisted in their determination and effort to conquer the world, without organization for coöperation and discipline. They might have continued to exist as scattered communities and might have kept alive the flame of devotion to Christ, but they could hardly have met successfully the obloquy of the world to which they were subject, coped with the reasoning of heathen sages, and braved the dread power of imperial Rome without the strength which comes from union and closely compacted organization.

Certain it is that, as time went on, the Church devoted herself to many objects which were not contemplated in our Lord's teaching concerning the coming of the Kingdom and in some cases were even radically contradictory of it. In the Church's success lay at once her great opportunity and her great temptation and danger. Such facts only make it the more evident that the test of her usefulness is the question whether she is serving and promoting the interests of the Kingdom of God — the fellowship of the Godlike — the prevalence of the Spirit of Christ among men. It matters not how compact and effective her outward organization, how elaborate and logically cogent her system of doctrine, how well authenticated and "valid" her ministry and sacraments — if the Church does not further the Kingdom of God, the reign of love, among men; if she does not promote brotherhood and helpfulness; if she does not foster the Christian virtues and enjoin the Christian duties; in a word, if she does not seek first God's Kingdom and righteousness and lay chief stress upon the Christlike life of sonship to God, then has she, just so far, apostatized from Christ. It matters not how outwardly historical or demonstrably continuous with antiquity a ministry is if it is worldly and selfish. It requires something more than formal resemblance to primitive usage to render sacraments means of grace. No Church is truly catholic which has not Christ's spirit of universal love; nor is it apostolic if destitute of that consecration and zeal which fired the Church of the first age with a passion for the salvation of men. All Churches have shown great deference to the rites and usages of the primitive Church and to the theological opinions of the apostles; it is no disparagement of these usages and opinions to say that the reproduction of their religious spirit, their subordination to the ideals of the Christlike life, is far more important. If a modern Church could imitate, without the smallest variation, all the practices of primitive Christianity, and if all its members could succeed in entertaining precisely the opinions and conceptions of Peter, Paul, John, and the rest, without addition or subtraction, — that would not make said Church truly apostolic, — all such imitation would avail nothing without the reproduction of the apostolic spirit. The mission of the Church is to promote the Kingdom of God in the world. In proportion as a Church does that, it is true to Christ; in proportion as it does not do that, it fails of its mission. Worse still, if it devotes itself to engendering envy, partisan strife, enmity, and contention, it is an apostate Church, be its organization, ritual, and orthodoxy what they may!

The life and life-work of Jesus prescribe the purpose of the Church because they define the nature of the Kingdom. The law for both is the law of the Spirit of life that was in Christ Jesus. He is the Head of both Kingdom and Church. And what are the watchwords of his authority and rule? We hear them in such sayings as these: He that serves most is greatest in my Kingdom; in order to enter into it, men must become as little children; take up the cross and follow after me if you would enter with me into my Kingdom. Christ is not a King in spite of his humility, lowliness, and meekness, but because of them. They are the badges of his royalty and the pledges of his victory. Servant of all and *therefore* King — such is the paradox of Jesus. Meek and lowly, he rides into the sacred city, not on a horse, the symbol of war, but on an ass, the symbol of peace, fulfilling thus the prophetic word: —

> "Tell ye the daughter of Zion,
> Behold, thy King cometh unto thee,
> Meek, and riding upon an ass,
> And upon a colt the foal of an ass."[1]

What a contrast to the kings of earth with their pomps and pageantry, their triumphal arches and captive trains! But no worldly monarch was ever so sure of his dominion and victory as was Jesus Christ. He was certain of the ultimate triumph of meekness, gentleness, and love. He foresaw victories such as no earthly potentate ever dared anticipate. He predicted for himself a dominion such as no worldly "votary of glory" ever dared aspire to in his dreams. He beheld Satan falling as lightning from heaven. He saw his Kingdom of love spreading like a leaven in the earth until the whole should be leavened. Under the shadow of his cross and in the very hour of apparent defeat he dared to tell his accusers that from that very moment they would see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven (Mt. xxvi. 64; Mk. xiv. 62; Lk. xxii. 69), and predicted that from his cross he would draw all men unto himself (Jn. xii. 32). Nothing can cloud his certainty that all power in heaven and on earth is at his command, and that, at length, his hand shall lead the world, bound in golden chains of love, unto the feet of God. Absolute faith in the power of meekness, the victory of patience, the dominion of love — that is the strange, incomparable wonder of Jesus Christ.

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[1] Zech. ix. 9; *cf.* Mt. xxi. 5.

CHAPTER XIV

SALVATION AND HUMAN DESTINY

PREVAILING popular usage refers salvation to a future state or world. To be saved means to escape punishment and to attain eternal blessedness after death. As we have seen, the New Testament use of the terms "salvation" and "eternal life" is not predominantly eschatological. Jesus spoke of men entering the Kingdom here and now, of a present possession of eternal life in the saving knowledge of God. Salvation is a present fact. But the outlook of Jesus into a life beyond this makes salvation include or involve also, as a prominent part of its meaning, a future consummation. The imperfections and limitations of this present life prevent the full realization here of the Christian idea of salvation. Hence the eschatological use of the term, though often too exclusive, is explained and justified. "We are saved in hope." Though confident of our sonship to God, we know that it does not yet appear what we shall be.

What salvation in the future life will be, under what conditions it will be realized, what will be its scope and who may hope to be its subjects — these and similar questions have been fruitful themes of speculation and discussion. In the Greek and Roman Catholic churches the idea of an intermediate state between this world and the final condition of men has been elaborately developed and applied. Those who die repentant expiate their sins by disciplinary penances in purgatory, by which they will be fitted, at length, for a heaven of perfect blessedness. Inasmuch as the priesthood was supposed to possess a certain power to control and regulate these expiatory chastisements, the Reformers saw in the doctrine of purgatory a potent means for ecclesiastical domination, dangerous in tendency and fraught with grave abuses in practice. They accordingly repudiated not only the specific doctrine in question, but the idea of a middle state in every form of it, apparently on the view that the surest way to be rid of purgatory was to leave no place where it could be located.

The traditional Protestant doctrine thus became very simple. All men at death pass immediately into heaven or hell — a final state of blessedness or of misery. The Westminster creeds embody the doctrine in typical form. There are, we are told, but "two places for souls" after death, — heaven and hell. "The souls of the righteous being then" (that is, at death[1]) "made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens," etc.; but the article goes on to say that they are still disembodied; for their spiritual bodies they must wait until the resurrection and final judgment. "The souls of the wicked are cast into hell" (also, by implication, at their death), "where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day."[2] In this view, then, salvation, in its eschatological aspect, involves: (1) the perfecting of the soul in holiness at death and its immediate reception into heaven; (2) the continuance of the soul in heaven in a disembodied state until the resurrection and last judgment; (3) the repose of the body in the grave from the time of death until the general resurrection, when it is raised up from the ground, endowed with new qualities, and reunited to the soul.[3] Such is the traditional Protestant doctrine. It is obvious that it involves the absolute fixation of final destiny at death for every human being — the impossibility of recovery to holiness for all who have died impenitent.

While this has been commonly regarded as the orthodox view of human destiny, in the sense in which the theory of vicarious punishment is the orthodox view of atonement, there have not been wanting, especially within recent years, numerous and wide departures from it. Among these we may note the theories of conditional immortality, of continuous moral opportunity in the life beyond, and of universal restoration.

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[1] *Shorter Catechism*, Q. 37: "The souls of believers are *at their death* made perfect in holiness," etc.

[2] *Confession*, ch. xxxii. 1.

[3] See *Confession*, ch. xxxii., and *Larger Catechism*, Q. 86.

The first of these theories has been held in a considerable variety of forms and on a variety of grounds, but, in general, it aims to establish the view that good men live forever and that bad men cease to exist. "To be, or not to be — that is the question." In its cruder form this theory maintains that God, who made man, may, for sufficient reasons, unmake him. If man proves false to his divine ideal, if by sin he persistently continues unprofitable and injurious, God will blot him out of being; in scriptural language, if he only cumbers the ground, he will be cut down. This form of the doctrine is called annihilationism. More commonly, the general theory that the wicked at length cease to be is held in some such form as this: Sin is, by its very nature, a soul-destroying power. If persisted in, it will put an end to the sinner's existence. God does not, by a positive act, annihilate the sinner; he simply leaves him to the operation and effect of his evil course, and he forfeits his existence by his own self-destructive persistence in sin. This argument is fortified by such scriptural sayings as: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (that is, cease to be) (Ezek. xviii. 4); "He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son hath not the life" (the principle and guaranty of continued existence) (1 Jn. v. 12). A metaphysical groundwork is often sought for this theory in the contention that man is naturally mortal in the sense that he ceases to be unless by a fulfilment of the positive condition of continuance in being he attains eternal life (that is, perpetual existence); unless he "lays hold on eternal life" in this sense, he expires, as it were, by the statute of limitations. By nature man is destined to extinction; "God alone hath immortality" (1 Tim. vi. 16). It will be noticed that these variations, within this general type of theory, are not slight. There is a wide difference between God's annihilating sinners and sinners annihilating themselves by their own action. Again, if cessation of existence is the law of man's natural being, it is wholly unnecessary to appeal to the soul-destroying power of sin to explain his disappearance. Causæ non sunt multiplicandæ sine necessitate. The two causes assigned — natural perishability and soul-annihilating sin — are quite diverse, and either, if real, is sufficient to explain the alleged result. If man is in this respect exactly like the brutes, it is a waste of time to quote Scripture or to theorize about sin. If he ceases to be *by reason of his nature*, it is more than superfluous — it is positively incorrect — to say that he ceases to be *by reason of his sins.* It would be purely gratuitous to pile up arguments to prove that the naturally perishable animal ceases to be.

Viewed on its positive side, this theory is that salvation is, primarily, continuance in existence. We are saved *from extinction* by obedience to God or by union with Christ. Not that the moral aspects of salvation are excluded or omitted, but the chief stress, especially in the more metaphysical form of the doctrine, must lie upon escape from our natural fate and the achievement of continued existence by union with the Source of life (in the sense of perpetuity of being). The exegetical arguments for the theory all turn upon this primary point. The "death," which in Scripture is declared to be the wages of sin, is interpreted to mean, primarily, extinction; the "life," which Christ came to bestow, is endless continuance in being. These terms are viewed as primarily metaphysical; their ethical import is secondary, however important. It is probable that the principal motive of the theory in question has been to escape the difficulties inherent in the conception of endless, irremediable misery.[1]

A second aberration from orthodoxy is the belief in continued moral progress for the good in the future life, or even in opportunity for repentance and conversion on the part of some (or many, or all) who were not Christian believers here. Some have only gone so far as to maintain that heaven will be a sphere of moral progress. The evil which inheres in the characters of good men, it is urged, cannot be conceived as eradicated in a moment. How should the transition which we call death effect such a transformation of character *instanter?* That would be a magical change, contrary to all our knowledge of moral progress and out of analogy with all that happens to us in this world. Hence some have questioned the assertion that believers were "made perfect in holiness" at death as unwarranted and inconceivable, and have supposed that they entered rather through the gate of death upon a new stage of moral progress.

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[1] Though holding that "the annihilation of living beings is no remedy for sin," Dr. Tymms adds that "a non-survival of inveterately wicked men would appear to our minds more congruous with the divine nature and purposes than the preservation of incurable sinners in conscious misery and persistent wickedness forever." *Atonement*, pp. 161, 162.

But it is evident that if any of these suggestions be adopted, it is hardly possible to stop with them. Any one of them is an entering wedge which inevitably cleaves asunder the compact affirmations of the traditional theory. If the moral life of the good is not absolutely static from the moment of death, is it certain that the moral condition of all who were *not* in this life prevailingly good, is absolutely fixed and changeless? Some have ventured to intimate that they did not feel sure that such was the case; others have braved ecclesiastical perils by asserting a positive inclination to the belief that there might be future "probation" for those to whom Christ had not been made known here; still others have made bold to declare that they could see no reason to suppose that the event of death necessarily marked, for every soul, the dividing line between the sphere of moral opportunity or change and the state of fixed and final destiny. Those who have followed the discussions of this subject in detail have been obliged to school themselves in nice distinctions. Some ecclesiastical authorities, for example, insisted upon repudiating candidates for the ministry who asserted that they thought there would be a future probation, while they were disposed to tolerate those who only *rather thought* so. Some advocates of the theory of future moral opportunity held that it would continue indefinitely; others that it would last but for the brief moment during which the soul was passing from the body. The former was called probation after death; the latter probation after breath. Some restricted this probation to infants,[1] others to infants and idiots. Some limited it to certain heathen; others extended it to all heathen; while still others, not finding where to draw the line, more or less positively asserted their belief that the method of God was essentially the same in all times and for all classes, and that moral recovery would be possible wherever and whenever any soul would choose to repent of sin and turn to God in humble surrender and trust. But not to enter further into the details of these recent eschatological controversies, one general result of them cannot be doubtful: the discussion has issued in a very common questioning and widespread modification of traditional opinions.

Not a few, following the lines of thought already referred to, have adopted the "larger hope" for mankind in general. If there is no sufficient reason to suppose that death is, in all cases, the dividing line between moral opportunity and final destiny, can it be shown that it is so for any class of persons? If the traditional theology even has sometimes felt constrained to admit an opportunity for the conversion of "sinful infants" in the world to come, why draw the line just there? Is any later sin more blameworthy than that first fatal transgression in which the infants in question are alleged to have participated? That primordial sin is declared to be sufficient to render every human being guilty from the very moment of birth, and, in consequence, an object of the wrath of God. If, then, for such infants equity seems to require a future opportunity for choice and decision, on the ground that they have had no such opportunity here, who shall say that there are not others who, quite as truly as young children, die in a moral infancy? Have not countless millions of men passed from earth without ever having had an opportunity to know anything of Christ or of the truths which he represents? Thus the "larger hope" is gradually extended from infants to moral incompetents and then to the heathen for whom often, in their condition and circumstances, only the crudest moral development and the most elementary moral testing were possible. But how, then, about the heathen in Christian lands — the multitudes who live and die in the slums of great cities? How much moral light do many of these people have? Can it be said, in any proper sense of the terms, that Christ in his real meaning is ever presented or known to them?

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[1] If all infants are "in a state of sin" (Dr. Strong), and if salvation is contingent upon repentance and faith, or personal acceptance of Christ, there is no possibility of their salvation except through a gracious opportunity offered in a future life. This view has afforded a welcome relief to some who would fain believe that all dying in infancy, and not merely "elect infants," are saved. Dr. Strong, *e.g.*, says: "It seems most probable that the work of regeneration may be performed by the Spirit in connection with the infant soul's first view of Christ in the other world. . . . The first moment of consciousness for the infant may be coincident with a view of Christ the Saviour, which accomplishes the entire sanctification of its nature." *Systematic Theology*, p. 357.

In ways like this the thoughts of men run on from one point to another, some venturing further in speculation or conjecture than others, according to the degree of their emancipation from traditional views. The point to be noticed is that many thoughtful men have become more and more impatient with the idea that this life only is a sphere of moral opportunity and progress, and that the next life is wholly unlike the present in this respect, — that in the world to come there is no possible progress or change, but only, from the moment of death, an absolutely fixed fate involving either consummate goodness or consummate badness. Whether rightly or wrongly, there has been a powerful revulsion of feeling, within the various divisions of Protestantism, against this conception. It appears to me that all the different modifications of it spring, in the main, from the same cause: the impossibility of sundering the future moral life of man so completely from his present life and of conceiving of the world to come in a manner so entirely out of analogy to all that we know of moral personality and development here. From the suggestion of moral progress for the good to the advocacy of the larger hope for mankind — all these forms of thought illustrate the effort to conceive the future world in some analogy with this, to connect the life of man there in an organic way with his life and character here, and to show that God rules all worlds according to the same moral laws. Progressive sanctification, future probation, larger hope — they are all of a piece; they differ in degree, not in kind. They all rest upon the same principle, variously applied. They are all equally opposed to the traditional Protestant position which excludes them by the same definitions by which it eliminated purgatory.

On what ground can it be shown that death marks the limit of "probation"? Death comes to men in the greatest variety of circumstances — in infancy and childhood, suddenly, by accident, after a long or a short day of moral opportunity or trial. What is there about the transition from one form or sphere of life to another which should make it in all cases the dividing line between moral education or testing and absolute fixity of character? Is it not conceivable that for some men probation is practically at an end long before their death? Then why may it not continue for others beyond death? It is not death, but choice and action oft-repeated and passing into character, which confirm the soul in evil or in good. There is no valid philosophical or ethical argument for the proposition that death necessarily ends moral opportunity, progress, or change, and seldom, if ever, is any effort made to construct such an argument. The evidence for the alleged fact is declared to be of quite a different character; it has been divinely revealed that death is the direct entrance to one of two final conditions — perfect holiness or absolute badness. This contention is fortified by such biblical expressions as: "In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be" (Eccl. xi. 3); "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still," etc. (Rev. xxii. 11); and, "After death judgment" (Heb. ix. 27). To all this it is added that the eternal (*αἰώνιος*) punishment which is declared to be the consequence of sin is absolutely endless. If, then, all men enter upon either endless felicity and perfect holiness or upon endless misery and utter badness at the moment of death, it is obvious that the scope of salvation is strictly limited to this earthly life. The traditional view is that it has been clearly revealed that such is the fact.

But some difficulties, partly scriptural, partly speculative, attend this conclusion. If in all cases final destiny is fixed at death, what can be left for a future judgment to decide? If, for example, the men who lived in ancient times have been for thousands of years in an absolutely final state of holiness or wickedness, what can be meant by saying that they still await a final moral judgment? To this the traditional view replies that there still remains the equipment of souls with bodies at the final resurrection and judgment. It might also be said that the fixed state of all men will be at that time formally sealed or proclaimed. But this answer is not so clear as one might fairly expect in case, as is claimed, there has been made an explicit divine revelation on the subject. The apostle Paul evidently considered the clothing of the soul with its appropriate heavenly embodiment as essential to the happiness and perfection of the personality. Without the spiritual body the soul was "unclothed" and, in a sense of its imperfectness, could but wait and yearn for its heavenly dwelling-place. Yet we are told that all the inhabitants of heaven itself are in this condition and must remain so until an indefinitely distant future resurrection. On the one hand, all the good are said to have attained their fixed and final state, so that the idea of moral progress for them is excluded, and yet, on the other, they are disembodied spirits, dismembered personalities, waiting and longing for the redemption of their bodies. Again, if judgment follows immediately upon death as is contended in the interest of the idea that death fixes destiny, what is to be done with the prevailing biblical representation that judgment is a future event occurring at the end of the age? Once more: How adjust this contention of a practically final judgment at death with the Johannine picture of a present and continuous judgment, "Now is the judgment of this world" (Jn. xii. 31)? The whole subject is difficult and it would be ungracious to make too much of inconsistencies in any eschatological scheme. But it is not inappropriate to point out that the traditional view is not so clear or congruous as to justify the common intolerance of its advocates toward all who venture to question it at any point, on the alleged ground that all questioning of it is wanton opposition to a direct revelation of God. I cannot help thinking that if God had revealed the conditions and issues of the future life so directly as traditionalism holds, he would have made his revelation both clearer and more consistent than is the doctrine which claims that authentication.

It will hardly be found possible, I imagine, in either a philosophical or a historical view of the subject, to establish the popular belief that this world only is a realm of moral development, the sole sphere of God's saving action. But it may be answered: Can the opposite belief be proved? I should admit at once that it cannot. Neither view can be proved, and for the same reason: We have no clear and certain means of knowing. Let it be understood, then, that in this matter we are dealing with presumptions, hypotheses, analogies. If this had been admitted by those who have conducted the eschatological controversies of recent years, we should have been spared much of the bitterness and intolerance which have characterized the discussion. But it is one of the paradoxical, yet natural, incidents of theological controversy that men are likely to be doggedly certain in proportion as there are no grounds of certainty. The psychology of this fact probably is that the lack of evidence must be supplied by vehemence of assertion. Hence controversies are apt to be bitter in proportion to the ignorance in which they are conducted. He who has any proper appreciation of the limits of human knowledge concerning what God may do and what humanity may experience beyond the bounds of this little life, will have no disposition to lay claim to any adequate previous information. He will be slow to think himself one who, in such matters, has known the mind of the Lord or been his counsellor, and will have learned to be tolerant of other men's judgments because somewhat distrustful of his own.

It is with this understanding of the nature of the problem — on the assumption that it is one which can be dealt with only in reverent conjecture — that I would point out some reasons for thinking that God's work in salvation may have a wider field than this world presents, and may achieve a harvest of souls of which the results which we behold here are but the first-fruits. As we have seen, the common method of dealing with the subject has been to cite proof-texts, on the assumption that the biblical writers will have pronounced, as a matter of course, upon questions of this character. This is certainly an unwarranted assumption. The only proper use of isolated phrases and verses in such a connection is in an unbiassed effort to determine in what direction the fundamental thoughts of a given writer look or tend. The problem is this : Is the grace which prompted Christ to come to seek and to save the lost adequately conceived when it is regarded as available only for inhabitants of earth ? It is not said, He who *hears* not, but he who *believes* not, shall be condemned. Now if this believing is limited to the conscious acceptance of Christ here on earth, then all the countless millions who have never heard of him are hopelessly lost. How would that idea comport with the Christian conception of God ? If, as Jesus said, the people of Tyre and Sidon would have repented if they had seen what the Jews saw, then on the supposition that God's grace is available in this life only, they would be condemned without ever having had any adequate opportunity to embrace the gospel, that is, condemned for what was not their fault — for not doing what, with greater light, they would have done. Again : If the sin against the Holy Spirit is not forgiven either in the present or in the coming age, does not that suggest that other sins may be forgiven in the coming age as well as in this ? On the other side, we are reminded of the sayings about being judged according to the deeds done in the body and of the words, "After death judgment." But how long after? Or is judgment continuous? We also read that the judgment of the world is now (Jn. xii. 31). These expressions in no way militate against the idea of an intermediate state. "Judgment," in Heb. ix. 27, is *κρίσις*, not *ἡ κρίσις*, the term for the final assize occurring at the end of the present world-age.

The early Church appears to have conceived the state beyond death after the analogy of the Hebrew idea of Sheol — a realm of the dead in contrast to this present world, but not necessarily implying fixation of destiny. Moral differences do indeed persist in the world beyond, but both good and bad are in Sheol or Hades, and the day of final judgment is yet in the future at the end of the age. Now, with such conceptions, what is the likelihood as to the question whether the period between death and judgment will be regarded as a period of grace? Some probably reflected little, if at all, upon this question; others gave forth only doubtful intimations, and there is no good reason to suppose that all Christian teachers would entertain precisely the same conceptions regarding it. But, in some cases, the canonical writers seem to betray a conviction that this intermediate period, at least, was a day of grace. The conception of Christ's descent, in the spirit, to the world of the dead, which was afterward embodied in the "apostles' creed," was already entertained within the New Testament period. In 1 Peter we are told that "he went and preached to the spirits in prison, which aforetime were disobedient" (iii. 19, 20), and that "the gospel was preached even to the dead" (iv. 6). If this was done at that particular time, why not at other times, or even continually? The early Church and the great majority of modern critical expositors agree that the above passages assert a work of salvation in the world of the dead. Now if that idea was unwarrantably developed and applied by the Roman Catholic Church in her doctrine of purgatory, it does not follow that the idea must be both false and unscriptural. The fact is that the traditional view that the passages do not refer to an extension of the time of grace beyond the event of death, was mainly due to Augustine, who, after much perplexity and wavering over their meaning, decided on dogmatic and practical, rather than exegetical, grounds that the words probably did not refer to a saving activity of Christ in the underworld.[1]

Considerations of a more general character are derived from the difficulty, already noticed, of conceiving the mixed and partially formed characters of men instantly transformed into absolute perfection or utter wickedness at the moment of death. On what ground should this be the case? Death is the dissolution of the physical body. Why should the sloughing off of this earthly embodiment have the effect to produce immediate fixity of character? On no theory but that of extreme asceticism could perfection be explained by escape from the body, but that explanation would not, of course, be applicable to the wicked, for whom death is said to mean immediate and irremediable badness. The theory seems magical and unnatural. It must be maintained, I think, not on any rational or ethical ground, but on the supposition that God has revealed that it will be so. All would probably agree that whatever grounds can be alleged for it, must be of the nature of naked authority. From this point of view a good many unwarranted assumptions have been made, on both sides, regarding the nature, scope, and purpose of divine revelation.

Again: What view of our question would seem to be required by the idea of the universality or absoluteness of Christianity? Does God seriously wish that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth?[2] Of course it has been widely held that he does not. He has chosen and determined, we are told, that all men shall not be saved, and has from eternity foreordained a portion of mankind to everlasting damnation "to the praise of his glorious justice."[1] But if we say, with the passage just cited, that in good faith God desires that all men be saved, the question then arises whether the grace of God that brings salvation is actually, in this world, brought practically and effectively within the reach of all. Have all the inhabitants of earth enjoyed in their lifetime here — so far as we can judge — an adequate opportunity to embrace the truth as revealed in Jesus Christ? In other words: Is it true that salvation is through Christ only? Does that mean that men must, in order to be saved, have some knowledge of him and believingly accept him? If so, do men generally have any adequate opportunity to do this, and are they eternally condemned for not doing what they never had an opportunity to do? Whatever may be thought of these questions, this much may be said: The advocates of continued moral opportunity and development have been able to maintain steadfastly the scriptural teaching that there is no way of salvation but through personal faith in Christ; their opponents have had the alternative, on the one hand, of abandoning it and substituting for salvation through Christ salvation through the light of nature and conscience, or, on the other hand, of believing and teaching that the unnumbered millions of mankind who have never heard of Christ have been eternally lost. It is creditable to men of this class that most of them have adopted the former view, in spite of the fact that it is a departure from traditional orthodoxy.[2]

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[1] *Letter to Evodius*, No. CLXIV, in the American ed. of the *Prolegomena, Confessions, and Letters.* The principal argument is that the reference of the preaching in question to the world of the dead would tend to weaken the motive to the propagation of the gospel in this world.

[2] 1 Tim. ii. 4, ὃς (θεός) πάντας ἀνθρώπους θέλει σωθῆναι, κ.τ.λ.

The fact that Christ is uniformly represented in the

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[1] *Westminster Confession*, ch. iii. 7.

[2] The traditional view is this: "The light of nature and the works of creation and providence are not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and of his will which is necessary unto salvation." *Westminster Confession*, ch. i. "Much less can men not professing the Christian religion be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature and the law of that religion they do profess; and to assert and maintain that they may be [saved] is very pernicious, and to be detested." Ch. x. The theory which is here so sternly condemned, now — strangely enough — passes for orthodoxy. It should be noted that, whatever its merits, it is as wide a departure from Protestant traditionalism as is the "larger hope."

New Testament as the final Judge of men would seem to imply that all men are to be judged at last by the specific tests of his truth and gospel, and how could this be apart from personal relation to him? Whether the doctrine of a Christian judgment necessarily implies a knowledge of the personal Christ on the part of all men or not, it can hardly imply less than such a knowledge of the truths which Christ represents as will constitute a decisive test of character. In whatever sense there is no salvation except in and through Christ, in that same sense there can be no final condemnation apart from the rejection of Christ. If a personal knowledge of Christ is essential to salvation, it must also be necessary to final condemnation. God cannot be so unjust as to accept men by the application of one test and reject them by the application of another. The traditional doctrine that the light of nature, apart from Christ, is sufficient to condemn men, but not sufficient to save them, is monstrous.

The rival theory to that of continuous moral opportunity and discipline is the theory of the "essential Christ" — the idea being that the truth of Christ is adumbrated in nature and reflected in conscience. The following of this light, it is said, is implicit or unconscious faith in Christ. It will be seen that the "essential Christ" is but another name for the light of nature by which the *Confession* informs us that no person can possibly be saved. I am far from certain of the authenticity of this information. It seems to me that the faith of the centurion and the acceptance of those who, having done loving service to Christ's brethren, had really done it unwittingly unto him, may properly be described in the terms of this theory. As against the traditional orthodoxy (of which it is a radical transformation), the theory of the immanent and unrecognized Christ is rational and comforting. But is it adequate to meet our problem? Have the vast mass of mankind ever had such a knowledge of the motives and principles of Christ as may fairly constitute a decisive test of them? Have the unnumbered millions of men who have passed from conditions of deep darkness and ignorance into the world beyond ever known or confronted here on earth the "essential Christ"; that is, have they ever perceived what Christ essentially is, have they ever discerned and contemplated the moral truths and religious ideals which his life and work represent and embody? For my part, with the fullest recognition of all the truths in the essential Christ theory which Scripture and observation can attest, it seems to me clear that, respecting countless multitudes of men, our problem remains unalleviated by that theory. The choice remains between the traditional view and a hope for mankind which is larger than this brief life.

There is an unwarranted assumption which is commonly shared equally by both parties to the discussion of our present theme, namely, that this life is to be contemplated primarily as a "probation." I suppose we must credit the prevalence of this conception largely to the influence of Butler's *Analogy*. That the moral life of mankind has a probationary aspect, no one doubts; but that man was placed here primarily to determine how he would abide certain tests is certainly a very inadequate conception of the nature and purport of human life. The notion in question has been greatly promoted by the popular ideas of primitive man's situation in paradise. He is supposed to have been placed there among trees bearing tempting fruits in order to let it be determined whether he would stand or fall. But human life is better conceived as a training school than as an inquisition. It is a discipline, an education, a growth. The question is not whether we may believe in a "second probation" for men, but whether we may legitimately hope for continued opportunity for moral choice and progress — at any rate, in the case of those who have little or no such opportunity here. The grounds for such a hope — estimate them as one may — are these: (1) the goodness and equity of God; (2) the presumptive continuity of the future life with this; (3) the fact that there is no evidence, scientific or philosophical, that death necessarily ends moral progress or excludes moral change; (4) the rational and biblical considerations favoring an intermediate state ; and (5) the explicit scriptural teaching that men are to be tested at last by their relation and attitude toward Christ. Whatever may be thought of them, these considerations are neither irrelevant nor irrational, and, in my judgment, they are far more cogent, consistent, and satisfying than the assumptions which underlie the traditional view of the subject.

But, now, suppose one makes this venture of faith and adopts as probable the supposition that the grace of God which brings salvation is not limited in its scope to this little planet, what then? Can we form any legitimate conjecture as to what will be the issue of continued moral opportunity and development beyond death? The Universalist believes that we may reasonably hope for the ultimate restoration of all men to holiness through the disciplinary chastisement of God and in the more favoring conditions in which we may believe men will find themselves in the world to come. For many it will be enough to know that this is a "heresy" repudiated in the leading Protestant creeds and commonly denounced in popular polemics. The history of the subject, however, more than suggests that this theory might have had a very different reception in the Christian world but for two circumstances: (1) its repudiation by Augustine and Jerome, and (2) the rejection by the Reformation of the doctrine of a middle state in every form. But, on the other hand, the theory in question was held by the great Alexandrian theologians, Clement and Origen, by the two Gregorys, who were among the most eminent representatives of ancient Greek theology, and by the two foremost theologians of the School of Antioch, Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia. It has been widely adopted by German theologians from Schleiermacher and Neander onward, while in England the civil courts have decided that it is a permissible belief within the English Church, and it has been favored by such men as Maurice, Plumptre and Farrar.[1]

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[1] See Dr. G. P. Fisher's essay on the "History of the Doctrine of Future Punishment" in *Discussions in History and Theology.*

Restorationism has also its proof-texts. Christ speaks of drawing "all men" unto him (Jn. xii. 32). Paul makes this sweeping comparison: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22), and a little farther on speaks of a time when "all things" shall have been subjected unto God that he may be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 28). Again: God "purposed to sum up all things in Christ" (Eph. i. 10), and through him to "reconcile all things to himself" (Col. i. 20). The apostle believes that "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess" the Lordship of Christ (Phil. ii. 10, 11). Further: God, who is "the Saviour of all men" (1 Tim. iv. 10), "wills (*θέλει*) that all men be saved" (1 Tim. ii. 4), and his "grace has appeared bringing salvation to all men" (Titus ii. 11). It would, I think, be admitted by any unprejudiced person that these verses lend as plausible a support to restorationism as the texts commonly cited lend to the support of any current eschatological theory.

It is common to oppose them and all arguments drawn from them by means of the Greek lexicon. Eternal punishment, it is said, means endless punishment, and that means an everlasting dualism of good and evil in the universe. Arguments from individual words, however, are apt to be precarious. *'Αιώνιος* means pertaining to an age (*αἴων*), or age-long. It no more means endless — necessarily — than *αἴων* means eternity. In the New Testament the *αἴων μελλων* is the contrast to the *αἴων οὗτος* — the coming age of messianic blessedness, as contrasted with this present, evil, ante-messianic age. In general these Greek words are used in much the same ways as the corresponding Hebrew term (עוֹלָם) in the Old Testament. Sometimes they are used quantitatively to denote an indefinitely long time; in other cases they refer rather to the character or quality of the eternal life — notably so in the Fourth Gospel — and sometimes they may mean practically what we try to express by "eternity." But their common use usually implies limitation. Let us note a few examples in which we will render the terms under discussion by *eternal* or *eternity* with a view to the question whether eternal is synonymous with endless. The covenant with Noah was an *eternal* covenant (Gen. ix. 16); Canaan was to be to the Israelites an *eternal* possession (Gen. xvii. 8); the Psalmist meditates upon the years of *eternity* (ages) (Ps. lxxvii. 5); the prophets have been from *eternity* (*ἀπ' αἴωνος*) (Acts iii. 21); God promised eternal life before *eternal* times (Titus i. 2). The terms are used sometimes with reference to the past, sometimes with reference to the future. They may mean: reaching back to an indefinite past time, or reaching forward indefinitely; or they may be not primarily temporal at all, but qualitative, emphasizing the characteristics of the coming age or of life in the coming age, or even in this world, so far as that life is shared here and now. It is *eternal life* to know God and Christ (Jn. xvii. 3); he who shares Christ's Spirit (drinks his blood) has *eternal life* (Jn. vi. 54). The words rendered "eternal" can settle the questions in hand only for those who have already settled them on other grounds.

But if we make the supposition that repentance and conversion are not impossible in the world to come, can any reason be given for supposing that they will take place? We must answer: We can no more prove this than any one can prove the contrary. What, then, is the probability? Does not character tend to fixity and is it not likely that men will persist forever in the characters which they acquire here? As to that, character tends to fixity *here;* yet many men, long confirmed in an evil life, do repent and turn to God. Perhaps, too, some new light will dawn, in the future world, on the darkened and rebellious minds of men; perhaps conditions will be more favorable to goodness in the life to come. What will be the concrete issues of a life or state with whose conditions we are not acquainted, I leave it for others to say. All that I am concerned to maintain is that there is no proof that God's grace and Christian salvation are no larger in their scope or possibility than this little life. On the contrary, it seems to me more congruous with the character of God to suppose that his laws and methods are essentially the same in all worlds, and that he will never shut the door of mercy against any repentant soul. Now whether all men, or many men, or some men, or no men at all, will repent in the coming age, we cannot know. But we are at liberty to hope that some, or many, or all, may, or even will, do so. It is not wicked to hope, and I, for one, refuse to be debarred from this right and privilege. Of one thing I am sure: No man has any information to the effect that death necessarily marks the boundary of the day of grace for mankind. I therefore exercise the liberty of hoping and believing that it does not. Beyond that I can only say this: All the moral arguments which are used to prove everlasting punishment justify equally belief in the possibility of recovery to holiness. If you say: Evil character tends to permanence, I answer: Yes, but in this life that permanence is relative, not absolute; who would assert that all sinners are absolutely bad and irrecoverable at their death? If you say: Punishment must last while sin is persisted in, I answer: Certainly, but no longer. If you say: There can be no unholy blessedness, I reply: Certainly not, but for the same reasons, there can be no condemned penitence. If you say: Punishment must be unending if sin is unending, I can only add that if, then, sin should cease, be repented of, and forsaken, of course penalty would cease. The point is: Can it be established by evidence that the sin of all who die unrepentant here will be persistent and unending? If it can, I have never met with the proof. It is a question, as Professor James would say, of the will to believe or not to believe — whether the choice under consideration is a "living option." Therefore, let him believe that death necessarily ends moral opportunity who can, or will; in the existing dearth of information and evidence, I will not.

CHAPTER XV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

IF it shall appear to any that the foregoing discussion has been unduly critical and has occupied itself too largely with stating and estimating the views of others, I would say, in explanation, that it has seemed to me necessary to the proper presentation of our subject and in order to form a just judgment on controverted points, to review its history, and even in our constructive efforts to keep the principles of the different theories constantly before us. It appears to me that there is no respect in which treatises on atonement are more generally defective than this, that they do not furnish their readers any clear account of the points of likeness and difference among theories and relate themselves definitely to the principles of some particular type of explanation. It cannot be assumed that most readers have made a first-hand study of the history of the doctrine. That being the case, if a writer, in addition to being indefinite or non-committal on points of chief interest and difficulty, also neglects to explain what these points are and how the historic theories have viewed and treated them, he is more likely to confuse than to illumine the minds of his readers. I have been very desirous not to fail in either of these essential particulars. I venture to hope that, whatever may be thought of my own personal views, the reader of this book will be somewhat helped to make his choice among theories. I have sought to show that each type of explanation has its own concept of God underlying it and that the choice of a theory must be based upon a corresponding conception of his nature and action. I have desired to exhibit, clearly and candidly, these various concepts of God. If it be thought by any one that I have in any case misconceived or misstated them, I can only urge that my interpretations and judgments be carefully tested by the somewhat numerous citations of opinions which I have reproduced from the representatives of the various theories.

I have designed to emphasize and illustrate the importance of studying theological subjects in the light of their history. And by their history I do not mean merely the bare fact that this or that was said by one or another. The history of a doctrine includes the appreciation of the atmosphere or thought-world in which a given theory had its rise, motive, and development. Much historical labor fails to lead to any just or helpful result because the ideas and theories of antiquity or of the Middle Age are not seen in historical perspective, but are viewed and judged by the standards and measures of our own thought and life. In this way new meanings come to be attached to old terms, the real characteristics of earlier theories are obscured, and much confusion and misunderstanding result. But when each successive type of explanation is studied in the light of its own time, and its presuppositions and principles are clearly defined and estimated, then the student has the means for making a clear and intelligent choice among the more or less divergent theories. Fortunately for our purpose, there is no Christian doctrine which has had a more definite and traceable history than the doctrine of atonement. While some theories are more clear-cut than others, and, within a given type, the divergences are often very difficult to define, still the lines of cleavage, for example, between the Anselmic, Grotian, penal, mystical, and moral theories are so clear and definite that one who adopts any view of the subject, not only can, but must, make a choice among them. While I have labored conscientiously to make my own personal opinions as plain as possible, it has been my main endeavor to supply the reader with the means of choosing and deciding the question among theories for himself. If, after carefully reviewing the whole subject, some may still prefer Anselm's theory, others that of Grotius, and still others that of Dr. Shedd, I will not disguise my regret; but I should regret far more deeply my failure — if I have failed — to clarify the points in dispute and to make it apparent among what fundamental views of God and of man the choice is to be made.

The studies which have resulted in the preparation of this volume have convinced me that the ultimate choice among theories of atonement reduces, at last, to the alternative between the penal satisfaction and the moral theory. Other theories are either elaborations of some anthropomorphic figure, or mediating and incongruous combinations, whose plausibility consists chiefly in their vagueness. The penal and the ethical views alone are definite and consistent. The former is based in a thoroughgoing dualism, which introduces division and antagonism everywhere — first and chiefly into the nature of God himself; the latter is based on the divine unity and love. Historically considered, the penal theory is kindred to the theology of late Jewish legalism, while the ethical view is deduced from Jesus' conception of the divine fatherhood. In the former, atonement is a precondition of salvation; in the latter, it is a name for the actual work of saving men. According to the former, the first work of Christ is to save God himself from inner discord by averting war among his attributes; according to the latter, he came to rescue the sinful sons of men to the Father's house and the Father's fellowship. Between these forever irreconcilable theories, based in radically different conceptions of God, lies the choice. Variations from both are, of course, possible, and there have been many intermediate positions, but they are hazy and inconsistent, because they rest on no well-defined principle. They try to find a standing-ground between dualism and a genuinely ethical monism, or to combine them. They aim to graft the ethicism of Jesus upon Pharisaic deism and heathen anthropomorphism. This cannot be successfully done. The choice should be frankly made between them.

It is no part of my intention to enter, in these closing remarks, into any further efforts to elucidate or justify the methods and conclusions which are embodied in this volume. My only object is to state as concisely as possible what these conclusions are, and thus to make as clear as I am able the answers which I would give to questions which thoughtful students of the subject are certain to ask. If the foregoing investigation and argument have not convinced the reader that the moral view of the work of Christ — the interpretation which construes it in terms of personal relationship and influence — is the truest and most satisfactory conception which we are able to form of his mission, life-work, and passion, it is too late for me to do anything toward convincing him. I will merely add, in this connection, that I should like to commend to any who may be interested to read further on the lines of this book, two clear and forceful presentations of the theory which I have advocated here: (1) a concise exposition of it in the relevant section of Dr. W. N. Clarke's *Outline of Christian Theology* (pp. 308–362); and (2) a more elaborate statement and defence of it in Dr. T. V. Tymms's *The Christian Idea of Atonement.*[1]

Not infrequently treatises on our subject give the impression of being clear on certain very general or formal principles, but of failing entirely to meet the specific questions on which one most needs and desires light. For example, there may be a constant assertion and maintenance of the principle that in the work of Christ God must and does manifest and vindicate his righteousness, while no effort is made to answer the questions: What *is* God's righteousness? and in what way or by precisely what means does Christ vindicate it? Too much must not be demanded of efforts to expound a great and mysterious subject, but readers have a fair right to expect that the most crucial points shall not be slurred over or evaded. In the hope of making my own views as clear as possible, I accordingly undertake to reproduce here, not indeed the substance of the argument hitherto developed, but the gist of my conclusions.

(1) Righteousness includes both "the goodness and the severity of God," that is, it embraces at once the gracious,

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[1] Macmillan, 1904.

self-imparting impulse and the self-respecting, self-affirming principle in God. It is the justice of God to his own nature; it embraces equally his benevolence and his purity; it is holy love. It is in this sense of the word, therefore, that we are to find an exhibition of God's righteousness in the work of Christ. To define righteousness in the narrow sense of retributive justice, the impulse and necessity to punish, is radically unscriptural and involves a series of inferences and corollaries which are incongruous with the Christian concept of God.

(2) Christ reveals and satisfies, not some single attribute of God arbitrarily defined and separated from his total moral perfection, but God himself in his saving, holy love. His passion is the consummate revelation of the divine love because it shows what love is willing to do, and what it is its very nature to do, in order to save. It reveals what sin is, since it shows how a sinful world treats perfect love. The passion of Christ thus exhibits the sinfulness of the world on the background of perfect holiness.

(3) Christ saves men by bringing them into fellowship with God, by enabling them to realize the life of sonship to God, which is their true design and destiny, and by founding and fostering by the Spirit of his life among and in men the Kingdom of the Godlike. Salvation is primarily salvation *from sin*, and in salvation from sin salvation *from penalty* is implicit. Christ saves men from sin by saving them to holiness. To represent the death of Christ as a device whose primary intention is to provide an escape from penalty, is to adopt too negative a conception of salvation and to lay the chief stress upon a subordinate aspect of it.

(4) The grace of God is absolute and free, and from it flow redemption and forgiveness. Hence the death of Christ is not the ground of forgiveness, or the fountain of mercy, but its outcome and expression. In our Lord's life, labors, and sufferings we behold, not the cause, but the method of grace. Therefore it is not correct to say that Christ procured for men the pardon of their sins by in-

fluencing the mind of God in their favor, and so inducing him to forgive. Christ lived, labored, suffered, and died, not to make God willing to save, but to show how willing he is and to make his eternal willingness effective — really to accomplish what God, in his holy love, desires to do.

(5) Christ atones for sin in the sense of judging, condemning, and abolishing it. He is substituted for men in the sense in which perfect love takes the place and bears the burdens of its objects. He gives the ransom which love always pays in its vicarious devotion. But this is no mere transactional procedure done outside of us. We must enter into its meaning and make it our very own. We must die with Christ in self-giving if we would rise and walk with him in newness of life. His work avails for us by our appropriation of his Spirit and by the realization of his law of life within us.

(6) The sinner in his sins can see in God only the wrathful Judge. Christ enables him to contemplate him in his mercy and pity. He reveals to sinful man the fact that, while God hates his sin, he loves *him;* he convinces sinners that, while God condemns their sin, he also loves and is ready to forgive *them.* Thus he reconciles men to God and transforms him, for their consciousness, from the angry God whom alone the sinful conscience can see, into the God of love whom repentance and faith embrace. Jesus Christ secures for us the forgiveness of sins and the favor of God by enabling us to see and know God as he truly is — at once holy and gracious. He moves us to a repentance and faith which change for us the face of God. We are enabled to see and acknowledge the Lamb in the midst of God's throne — the love that is at the heart of his power and sovereignty.

(7) Christ's whole aim was to induce men to desire and accept pardon. His death created no new fact in God. His mission was to incite mankind to faith in the infinite love of God. When men thus see Christ in love bearing the burdens of their sin in his profound sympathy and suffering, how can they help hating their sin? They must see that God will save at whatever cost of suffering.

(8) Here emerges the truth of "eternal atonement." In the work of Christ we behold a transcript of the eternal passion of the heart of God on account of sin. Over against the sin which pierces the Saviour's heart we see the holy love which will not abandon us and let us be lost to itself. At the cross we see the justice which justifies and saves, but which saves only by condemning sin and by rescuing us from sin to holiness. Salvation is no mere acquittal, a letting-go or remission; it is a recovery to God-likeness, to holiness, and all that Christ does to save us is an assertion and maintenance of the standard of holiness. Apart from the divine ideal of holiness salvation can have no proper meaning.

(9) The work of Christ is not a mere provision for man's salvation, or a condition precedent, but an *actual work of salvation*, a real moral recovery of men from sin to goodness. The primary fact is that Christ saves us from alienation from God into fellowship with him. He lived, labored, suffered, and died, that we might not live the isolated and selfish life — that he might deliver us from the present evil world, purge our consciences from dead works, and redeem us from every vain manner of life. Christ saves us by taking us into the fellowship of his own life of perfect love and sacrifice and by introducing us into a sonship to God like his own.

(10) Christ perfectly fulfilled the life of sonship to God; and the progressive realization of the same sonship and of human brotherhood by humanity, in the Spirit of Christ, is the atonement — the reconciliation of man with God. The object of all that Christ did and experienced was to make men one with God. His work proceeded upon the assumption that God and man were not essentially alien, but kindred, natures, — despite the moral separation caused by sin, — and this kinship makes the atonement possible. Reconciliation is the fulfilment of the divine idea of man. Man can come to himself only as he comes to God in free obedience and love. This recovery of man alone can satisfy God. It is God's nature to seek and to save; for him to do that is not to be doing something

extraordinary, peculiar, and special; it is not an exceptional, but a natural, procedure. Hence atonement is a perpetual, eternal work of God. The atoning work of Christ is the production of the consciousness and experience of sonship in mankind. In the cross we see consummately revealed what we see in Christ always and everywhere — the perfection of his divine obedience and charity, his submissive endurance of hatred and suffering that he might complete the work of love and bring the sinful world to the feet of God. The atonement is a continuous and progressive work. Men are dying with Christ and rising with him still, filling up that which is behind of his sufferings, entering into the Spirit of his work, and repeating in themselves his life of sacrifice. To do this is salvation.

As I lay down my task, I should like to appropriate the words with which Auguste Sabatier closed the book with which he ended his life-work: "He who writes these lines knows better than any other that his long and difficult enterprise is only a preliminary essay. If he does all that in him lies to bind up his sheaf, it is that he may give to others an idea of the fertility of the field in which he has labored, and thus attract to it new laborers stronger and more able than himself. Never for a moment does he shut his eyes to the fact that his sheaf, so painfully and perhaps prematurely bound, must be unbound again to receive, perhaps ears grown at an earlier day and which he ought not to have overlooked, and surely ears of a new harvest not yet come to maturity."[1]

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[1] *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*, p. 378.

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